NECHAKO

Tourism Development Strategy

Final Report

Province of British Columbia
Ministry of Economic Development,
Small Business and Trade

BC
N43
D: N435
1991
c 3

Canadian Cataloguing in Publication Data
Nataros, Michelle.
Nechako tourism development strategy final report

ISBN 0-7726-1512-8

1. Tourist trade - British Columbia - Bulkley-Nechako. 2. Tourist trade - British Columbia - Fraser-Fort George. 3. Nechako Development Region (B. C.) I. Nechako Tourism Task Force. II. British Columbia. III. Title.

G155.C3N37 1992 338.4'79171182 C92-092104-3

NECHAKO

TOURISM

DEVELOPMENT

STRATEGY

Final Report

Prepared for:
Tourism Task Force
Nechako Development Region
Ministry of Economic Development,
Small Business and Trade

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October, 1991

92-06155/

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Table of Contents

1.0 Executive Summary 1

2.0 Introduction 3
2.1 Purpose 3
2.2 Tourism Task Force Mandate 3

3.0 Methodology 4

4.0 An Industry Profile 5

5.0 Resource and Product Overview 6
5.1 Regional Setting 6
5.2 Communities 9
5.3 Historical Resources 11
5.4 Key Tourism Products 12

6.0 Market Overview 17
6.1 Market Profiles 17
6.2 Primary Markets 17
6.3 Main Purpose for Travel 20
6.4 Visitor Origin 21
6.5 Visitor Characteristics 22

7.0 Public Input 23

Part II Nechako Tourism Development Strategy

8.0 Nechako Tourism Strategy 29
8.1 Rationale 29
8.2 Objectives 29
8.3 Pre-eminent Issues 33
8.3.1 Native Land Claims 33
8.3.2 High Costs 33
8.3.3 Road Conditions 34

8.4 Recommendations 35

Priority #1
Strengthen Lines of Communication 35

Priority #2
Ensure the Tourism Industry Receives Due Consideration in Resource-Use Planning 36

Priority #3
Increase the Awareness of the Positive Impacts of Tourism 37

Priority #4A
Address Financing for Tourism Ventures 39

Priority #4B
Address Financial Incentives for Tourism Ventures 40

Priority #5
Encourage Improved Access for the Mobility-Impaired 41

Priority #6
Improve Tourism Services Throughout the Nechako Region 41

Priority #7
Locate Area Tourism Information Signs in Current and Future Highway Pull-outs and Rest Stops 43

Priority #8
Identify and Adopt a Common Regional Identity 44

Priority #9
Increase Visitor Revenues Through the Development of Regional and Local Activity Packages 45

Priority #10
Increase the Quality of Service to Our Visitors 46

Priority #11
Identify and Prepare an Overview of the Heritage, Cultural and Natural Resources in the Region 47

Priority #12
Improve Highway Signage 48

Priority #13
Increase the Number of Outdoor Opportunities and Products 49

Priority #14
Improve Marketing Services and Regional Promotions 50

9.0 Implementation Framework **52**
9.1 Regional Action Committee 52
9.2 Subcommittees 52
9.3 Potential Sources of Funding 56
Public Sector 56
Private Sector 56

List of Exhibits

Exhibit 5.1 Map of the Nechako Development Region 7
Exhibit 5.2 Map of the B.C. Tourism Regions 8
Exhibit 5.3 Community and Regional District Population Estimates 9
Exhibit 6.1 Ranked Market Profiles 18
Exhibit 6.2 Main Purpose for Travel 21
Exhibit 6.3 Visitor Origin 21
Exhibit 6.4 Visitor Travel Characteristics 22
Exhibit 7.1 Summary of Community-Identified Opportunities and Constraints 24
Exhibit 8.1 Regional Assets 30
Exhibit 8.2 Regional Opportunities and Constraints 31
Exhibit 8.3 Recommendations in Order of Priority 32
Exhibit 9.1 Partners in Implementation 53
Exhibit 9.2 Recommended Time-lines 58

Appendices

Appendix A	Let's Talk Tourism! Nechako Region Community Input: Results from the Community Tourism Planning Meeting
Appendix B	Community Meetings: Attendance & Written Response Totals
Appendix C	Participant Contact List
Appendix D	Tourism Terms and Definitions
Appendix E	Preparation of a Regional/Community Theme
Appendix F	Post *Let's Talk Tourism* Tourism Planning Meetings Community Input
Appendix G	References

1.0 Executive Summary

In recognition of the benefits of a diversified economy, the Nechako Regional Advisory Council established that the development of an action-based regional tourism development strategy was a top priority.

The development of the Nechako Tourism Development Strategy was structured to ensure that all stakeholders had access to the input process. A discussion paper was prepared and distributed, verbal and written submissions were encouraged, and 13 community meetings were held.

As a result of this consultative process, the Nechako Tourism Task Force identified the following 14 action-based recommendations:

Priority #1	Strengthen Lines of Communication
Priority #2	Ensure the Tourism Industry Receives Due Consideration in Resource-Use Planning
Priority #3	Increase the Awareness of the Positive Impacts of Tourism
Priority #4A	Address Financing for Tourism Ventures
Priority #4B	Address Financial Incentives for Tourism Ventures
Priority #5	Encourage Improved Access to Tourism Facilities for the Mobility-Impaired
Priority #6	Improve Tourism Services Throughout the Nechako Region
Priority #7	Locate Area Tourism Information Signs in Current and Future Highway Pull-outs and Rest Stops
Priority #8	Identify and Adopt a Common Regional Identity
Priority #9	Increase Visitor Revenues Through the Development of Regional and Local Activity and Tour Packages
Priority #10	Increase the Quality of Service to Our Visitors
Priority #11	Identify and Prepare an Overview of the Heritage, Cultural, and Natural Resources in the Region
Priority #12	Improve Highway Signage
Priority #13	Increase the Number of Outdoor Opportunities and Products
Priority #14	Improve Marketing Services and Regional Promotions

Three pre-eminent issues emerged. These have an ongoing effect on tourism development in the Nechako Development Region, as they will on all of northwest British Columbia. The Nechako Tourism Task Force strongly recommends that Native land claims, high costs, and road conditions become priorities with the Government of British Columbia. It is beyond the scope of this task force to address the above issues. However, the Tourism Task Force (TTF) recommends that the Nechako Regional Advisory Council take these issues directly to cabinet for action.

As the next step, a tourism action committee should be formed to manage the implementation of the strategy. Operating under the direction of this committee, subcommittees should be established, each with a mandate to co-ordinate the implementation of one or more specific priorities. Implementation of the strategy will be the responsibility of government, the private sector and the communities.

2.0 Introduction

In recognition of the benefits of a diversified economy, the Nechako Region Advisory Council established that the development of an action-based regional tourism development strategy was a top priority. In late 1990, the Nechako Tourism Task Force was formed to co-ordinate the development of such a strategy.

The Nechako Tourism Task Force recognizes that changes in tourism are going to happen whether they are planned for or not. Well-planned tourism responds to available resources, the environment, the needs of present and potential visitors, and the community's needs. Most of the people who live in the Nechako region have made a lifestyle choice to live in this environment. Unplanned tourism can negatively alter that environment. Therefore, it is anticipated that the following tourism development strategy will assist in preserving and enhancing existing lifestyles as well as diversifying the region's economy.

2.1 Purpose

The primary purpose of this strategy is to provide a tourism development plan for the Nechako region. Specifically, the strategy is to identify tourism development opportunities which are practical, have potential for successful implementation and are based upon the desires of the region's residents. Properly implemented, a sound tourism development strategy can diversify both local and regional economies and thus improve the quality of life for the region's residents.

From a provincial perspective, the Nechako Tourism Development Strategy will become a part of the overall provincial tourism development strategy.

2.2 Tourism Task Force Mandate

It is the mandate of the Nechako Tourism Task Force to provide direction and a regional focus in the development of an *action*-based tourism strategy--a strategy that reflects the needs and aspirations of the people living in the Nechako Development Region.

3.0 Methodology

The strategy has been based on information generated through:

- the review of secondary data pertinent to the Nechako Development Region;
- the preparation and distribution of a public response discussion paper;
- public input generated through a series of 13 community tourism planning meetings;
- interviews with tourism operators, Native Band representatives, interest groups, government agencies and other stakeholders; and
- meetings and workshops with the Nechako Tourism Task Force.

The development of the Nechako Tourism Development Strategy was structured to ensure that all stakeholders had access to the input process. As the initial step towards this goal, the Nechako Tourism Development Discussion Paper was prepared and distributed.

The distribution of the discussion paper was then followed by a series of community meetings and interviews. To alert the general public to the upcoming meetings, advertisements were placed in local newspapers, letters were sent out, and posters were placed in high-visibility locations. As well, individuals and groups were contacted by their community Tourism Task Force representative.

Each meeting opened with a cursory explanation of the meeting's objectives and a brief description of the discussion paper. The remainder of the meeting was devoted to discussion. In essence, the Nechako tourism planning meetings were brainstorming sessions, designed to identify opportunities and constraints as perceived by the community stakeholders.

The resulting community input was synthesized and reviewed by the Tourism Task Force. Based on the above information and secondary sources, the task force identified regional priorities, recommendations and implementation plans.

A record of each community's input was circulated back through the communities to key players and community planning meeting participants.

4.0 An Industry Profile

Globally

Currently, tourism is one of the most important economic activities in the world. Globally, it is the second-largest industry and by the year 2000 is expected to be number one! According to a recent American Express study, in 1990 the world's spending for tourism exceeded $2.1 trillion, giving the tourism industry the right to claim that it is the largest industry worldwide. Tourism employs one in 16 people worldwide, making tourism the largest employer in the world.

Nationally

Canadian Tourism Facts, February 1991 reveals that the tourism industry generated $25 billion in revenues, $16.8 billion in direct wages and salaries, and nearly $11.3 billion in revenue for all levels of government. By sector, tourism, at $7.2 billion, was the third-largest **export** industry in Canada, behind motor vehicles ($24 billion) and automobile parts ($10.8 billion). Tourism spending generated direct employment for more than 622,400 Canadians. One in 10 Canadians derive all or part of their income from tourism revenues.

Provincially

Tourism is one of British Columbia's largest industries. *Super Natural News and Views* confirms that in 1990, tourism in British Columbia generated $5.2 billion in direct revenues. Touring British Columbians account for 52 per cent of the total overnight tourism revenues, adding $2.7 billion to the provincial economy and accounting for more than 67 per cent of total visitor volumes.

Sustained Growth

Sustained success in tourism is invariably measured in terms of growth. The principle applies to private operations as well as communities and regions. Successful growth-oriented tourism depends on effective planning and development strategies, followed by the implementation of these plans and marketing . For British Columbia to maximize tourism's full potential, a greater commitment to the planning process on the part of all tourism operators, levels of government, communities and other stakeholders is essential.

5.0 Resource and Product Overview

This section provides a general overview of the tourism resources and products within the Nechako Development Region. Included is a brief description of the regional setting, the communities, the historical resources, and the tourism products found within the region.

5.1 Regional Setting

The Nechako region is one of British Columbia's most geographically diverse regions, featuring many spectacular landforms, from the largest natural lake in British Columbia, to the extensive river systems of the central plateau, to the mountain ranges and wilderness areas that stretch to the province's northwestern corner. Outdoor and adventure opportunities abound in this region and include some of the world's most spectacular freshwater sportfishing, big game hunting and wildlife viewing. As well, the region contains vast areas of untouched wilderness offering significant backcountry adventure potential.

The Nechako region is a composite of the Regional District of Bulkley Nechako to the south and the unorganized area of the Stikine to the north. The northern half of the Nechako region is bounded by the St. Elias Mountains in the northwest corner. The northern interior consists of the Stikine Plateau, which extends northward to the British Columbia and Yukon border. To the northeast lie the Cassiar Mountains, which extend south to the northern limits of the Rocky Mountain Trench. The southern half of the region consists of the Skeena and Hazelton mountains to the southwest. Nestled between these ranges lies the Bulkley Valley. To the southeast of the Bulkley Valley is the Lakes District and the Nechako Valley. Exhibit 5.1 profiles the Nechako Development Region.

The climate is mainly Northern Interior Continental, with long, cold winters and short, cool summers. The climate in the northwestern corner of the region is moderated due to its close proximity to the ocean.

Transportation options within the region include road, air and rail. The British Columbia Ferry Corporation service provides water access to the Nechako through the North Coast Region.

Most of the Nechako Development Region lies within the boundaries of the North by Northwest (NXNW) Tourism Region. The mandate of the NXNW Tourism Association is to generate regional tourism revenues through the development, co-ordination and execution of marketing campaigns on behalf of the private-sector members of the association. Exhibit 5.2 outlines the boundaries of the NXNW Tourism Region.

Exhibit 5.1

Nechako Development Region

Exhibit 5.2

B.C. Tourism Regions

A Vancouver Island
B Southwestern B.C.
C Okanagan-Similkameen
D Kootenay Country
E High Country
F Cariboo
G North by Northwest
H Peace River, Alaska Highway
I Rocky Mountain

5.2 Communities

The communities, are situated along the region's main transportation routes, highways 16, 37, 27 and 7. Mainly, they service the touring market destined for the West Coast or the Yukon and Alaska. As well, each community in the Nechako Development Region has the potential to attract tourists because of its close proximity to outstanding natural, historical and cultural resources.

Exhibit 5.3

Community and Regional District Population Estimates

	Census 1986	Estimate 1988	Estimate 1990	% +/-
Burns Lake		1,698	1,631	-3.9
Fort Fraser	405			
Fort St. James		1,924	1,924	-0.0
Fraser Lake		1,250	1,159	-7.3
Granisle		668	694	+3.9
Houston		3,701	3,508	-5.2
Smithers		4,728	4,847	+2.5
Telkwa		854	866	+1.4
Vanderhoof		3,210	3,126	-2.6
Unincorporated Settlements		18,922	19,381	+7.5
Bulkley-Nechako District:		**36,955**	**37,136**	**+0.5**
Atlin	506			
Cassiar	921			
Dease Lake	271			
Outlying Areas	466			
Stikine District:	**2,164**	**1,896**	**1,658**	**-12.6**
Nechako Development Region Total Population:		**38,851**	**38,794**	**-0.1**

Source: Planning and Statistics Division, Ministry of Finance and Corporate Relations.

Note: While the above figures identify officially collected community population figures, it is recognized that when the total service population base is considered, the above figures generally double. The Nechako Tourism Task Force representatives caution against their use for budgeting purposes.

Atlin, on the shores of British Columbia's largest natural lake, is bordered by the sprawling Llewellyn Glacier and Atlin Provincial Park. The community's colourful past as a Klondike Gold Rush town is recaptured in its historic buildings and abundance of historically rich artifacts that remain in place today. In early spring, Atlin hosts the annual Dog Sled Mail Run from Carcross to Atlin.

Burns Lake ranks the RV touring market as its number one tourism market. It is an important service centre to the RV market and the Lakes District. Burns Lake is one of the gateways to the region's most accessible and popular outdoor recreation area--Tweedsmuir Park. The Lakes District offers over 3,000 miles of waterway and an abundance of opportunities for water-based tourism activities.

Cassiar is a mining community nestled in the Cassiar Mountains just south of the Yukon-British Columbia border. Its location is ideal for guided gold rush and wilderness adventures.

Dease Lake provides essential services to the touring market along the Stewart-Cassiar Highway and serves as a hub for adventure tourism expeditions.

Fort Fraser lies between the Bulkley and Nechako valleys at the confluence of the Upper Nechako and Lower Nechako rivers. The community was originally established as a trading post and later became part of B.C.'s first agricultural area. For the tourist, there are outdoor adventure opportunities and services for the touring visitor.

Fort St. James is less than a one-hour drive north of Vanderhoof on Highway 27. It was the first capital of British Columbia and has one of the region's major destination tourist attractions: the Fort St. James National Historic Park. The community of Fort St. James also services the smaller settlements of Manson Creek and Germanson Landing.

Fraser Lake also acts as a service centre to the popular Lakes District recreation area, attracting mainly regional and provincial residents. The Lakes District offers over 3,000 miles of waterway and an abundance of opportunities for water-based tourism activities.

Granisle began as a mining town but now primarily attracts visitors seeking outdoor recreation opportunities connected to the 110-mile-long Babine Lake. The area is rich in Native history dating back as far as the 1700s. Granisle also offers fossil beds, a display of locally discovered mammoth bones, and weekly tours of the Bell Mine during the summer months.

Houston is situated midway between Prince George and Prince Rupert, at the confluence of the Morice and Bulkley rivers. Houston is primarily a forest resource community ideally located to act as a sportfishing centre and hub for other outdoor and sport enthusiasts. Houston ranks the touring RV market as its number one tourism market, for which it provides a variety of services.

Smithers is nestled in the scenic Bulkley Valley surrounded by the Coast Mountains. It is the region's busiest service and business centre. The community has developed its tourism industry and is now becoming a well-known outdoor and sport recreation area in the north. Smithers ranks the rubber tire touring market as having the largest tourism economic impact on the area.

Telkwa is on Highway 16, in the 'sunny spot' of the Bulkley Valley. It offers several services and facilities to the touring market and for the outdoor enthusiast. Telkwa is the gateway to a variety of quality outdoor and sport recreation areas.

Vanderhoof, the geographical centre of British Columbia, services not only the touring market, but also sport fishermen and outdoor enthusiasts. Vanderhoof is host to the Vanderhoof International Airshow. It is the largest camp-in airshow in Canada, attracting upwards of 20,000 spectators. The community ranks festivals and events as their number one tourism products.

5.3 Historical Resources

The Nechako possesses numerous historical resources including Native history and culture, fur trading, contact with early explorers, a series of gold rushes, the telegraph trail and the pioneer settlers.

The region was first occupied by various tribes of the Tahltan, Carrier-Sekani and the Dax Ka Nation. First contact with European explorers occurred during the late 1700s.

In 1806, Simon Fraser established trading posts at Fort St. James and Fort Fraser. He was working as a member of the North West Trading Company, which became part of the Hudson Bay Company in 1821. In later years, Fort St. James became the capital of New Caledonia. Today the Fort St. James Hudson Bay Company trading post is a national historic park.

In 1872, the first of the interior gold rushes were to begin. During Cassiar gold rush, which lasted until 1877, hundreds of prospectors braved the northern conditions. Miners travelled the Chilkoot Trail from Skagway, Alaska, to Bennett Lake, British Columbia, during the famous 1897-98 Klondike Gold Rush. The trail is now part of the international Gold Rush Historic Park. Atlin experienced the last of the placer gold rushes in the province. The Atlin rush lasted from 1898 to 1908.

The building of the telegraph line between Hazelton and Dawson City cut through rugged northern wilderness. It linked the northern wilderness with the south until the widespread use of the wireless radio in the 1930s.

In 1914, the northern Trans-Canada Railway was completed. The last spike of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway was driven at Fort Fraser on April 7, 1914. The completion of this line was the catalyst for the settlement of the Nechako Valley, the first agricultural area in the province.

5.4 Key Tourism Products

This section provides an overview of the region's key tourism products: touring; outdoor, sport and adventure; independent business, meetings and conferences; visiting friends and relatives; and festivals and events.

Tourism products are a combination of travel-generators (attractions), and the tourism service plant. Travel-generators are features that draw visitors to an area. Examples are: scenery; natural and man-made attractions; adventure; escape; wilderness; culture; history; and business travel. The tourism service plant includes: restaurants; hotels, motels and campgrounds; transportation; service stations; and retail businesses that fulfil the visitors needs.

Touring

The major touring features of the Nechako region include its heritage attributes (Native Indian culture fur trading, the Klondike Gold Rush and pioneer settlements). Its outstanding natural landscape features the opportunity to participate in a variety of outdoor recreation activities ranging from wildlife viewing to sportfishing to trail riding.

Regional Circle Tours

There are several regional country road circle tour opportunities available to the touring visitor. One example of a regional circle tour is in the southern Lakes District area. The tour originates from either Burns Lake or Houston, and travel is along a picturesque country road system that makes its way south to Ootsa and Francois Lake. At some point during the tour, the visitor crosses Francois Lake by ferry.

Intraprovincial Circle Tours

Segments of the Nechako region are utilized in two of the intraprovincial circle tours being marketed: the Northern Circle Tour and the Totem Circle Route.

The Northern Circle Tour promotes pristine beauty, the culture of the Native Indians, and the northern pioneer's way of life. This tour encompasses both major travel corridors in the region: the Yellowhead and Stewart-Cassiar highways. The route traverses east-west along the Yellowhead Highway from Prince George to Kitwanga, and north-south along the Stewart-Cassiar Highway to Watson Lake. Here, the tour spikes out, breaking from the circle and visits Atlin utilizing the east-west portion of the Alaska Highway. Watson Lake and Prince George are connected north-south by Highway 97.

The Totem Circle Route highlights the culture of the coastal Native Indians, and has proven to be extremely popular. It combines highway and ferry transportation systems incorporating Vancouver, Vancouver Island, the east-west Highway 16 corridor between Prince Rupert and Prince George (this leg of the tour traverses the southern portion of the Nechako region), and the north-south corridors between Prince George and Vancouver. As well, visitors travelling to or from Prince Rupert to complete ferry linkages to or from Vancouver Island, the Queen Charlotte Islands and Alaska contribute significantly to the volume of touring traffic passing through the region.

Outdoor, Sport, and Adventure

The outdoor, sport, and adventure product is very important to the Nechako region. The region's diverse geographic features, including mountain ranges, extensive water networks and vast untouched wilderness areas support a variety of activities.

Guide-Outfitting

Guide-outfitting and big game hunting comprise most of the tourism activity in the northern part of the region. The area features a remarkable variety of wildlife species including caribou, goats, moose, deer, grizzly and black bears, wolves and thinhorn sheep. These wildlife species represent a significant resource value to the region. Guides and outfitters are attempting to extend their season and target an additional market by developing non-consumptive activities such as wilderness and wildlife viewing expeditions.

Freshwater Sportfishing

Sportfishing is extremely important in Nechako, with many fishing camps and resorts located throughout the southern part of the region. The north also offers excellent sportfishing, but the potential is largely undeveloped due to limited access to many prime lakes and rivers.

Winter Activities

Winter activities in the Nechako are not well-developed. However, downhill and helicopter skiing facilities are available at Hudson Bay Mountain in Smithers and downhill skiing is available at Murray Ridge Ski Area in Fort St. James. The region has the potential to further develop its winter product line with activities such as cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, dog sledding and icefishing.

Backcountry Recreation

Some of the most spectacular scenery in the region is in the backcountry. Access to this area is limited to air, water, foot or horseback. While this may be viewed as a constraint, it offers the potential to develop a specialized product appealing to the high-end adventure seeker.

Midcountry Recreation

The region has excellent potential for recreation in the midcountry zone (a wildland environment that is accessible by motorized vehicle and capable of supporting an intermediate number of visitors).

The southern part of the region has relatively easy road access to its extensive lake and river systems. The natural landscape supports touring, trail riding, canoeing, hiking, kayaking, fishing, boating and river rafting.

River Rafting

The river rafting capability of the region is also outstanding. Both the Stikine and Tatshenshini rivers are rated as highly challenging and draw large numbers of international visitors to participate in the thrill of the whitewater experience. Other rivers with commercial rafting, whitewater canoeing and kayaking potential are the Dease, Babine, Bulkley, Morice and Nechako.

Wilderness Park Areas

The Nechako region provides some of the province's most sought-after wilderness park areas including Atlin Park, Atlin Recreation Area, Spatzizi Plateau and Tweedsmuir Park. Besides supporting popular recreation and adventure activities, these parks play an important role in landscape and scenic view area protection and wildlife habitat preservation and interpretation. These parks, with other recreation areas such as Babine Mountain and Bora Lake, preserve vast areas of scenic and recreational wilderness throughout the region.

Meetings, Conferences, and Independent Business

Currently, the regional centre benefiting most from the small meetings and conferences market is Smithers. It is more likely to host provincial conferences and meetings because of its direct air service from Vancouver. Most of the other communities in the region have the necessary infrastructure in place to accommodate small-sized meetings and conferences.

Independent business travel gravitates towards Houston (because of its role as a mineral resource and manufacturing centre) and Smithers (because it's the regional government centre). Most of the other communities experience more modest regional independent business travel.

Visiting Friends and Relatives

Travel for the purpose of visiting friends and relatives accounts for a large portion of tourism to this region. All visitors, including friends and relatives, rely on the services provided by the tourism plant and infrastructure.

This group has a significant impact on revenues to the region. They visit local attractions, buy groceries, and generally take part in available tourist activities. If the number of reasons for visiting friends and relatives was increased, one could speculate that increased spending would logically follow.

Festivals and Events

Community-driven festivals and events have proven to be very successful in attracting visitors from throughout the region and, sometimes, the province. These same festivals and events extend the touring market's length of stay and expenditures within the region.

The region would benefit from the continued development and promotion of existing events and festivals, particularly those relating to cultural and heritage themes. Existing examples include sanctioned rodeos, the Vanderhoof International Airshow, the Burns Lake Bluegrass Music Festival, the Smithers Bulkley Valley Exhibition, the Dog Sled Mail Run from Carcross to Atlin, and annual fall fairs.

6.0 Market Overview

6.1 Market Profiles

Before the Tourism Task Force could priorize community-identified projects, they first had to review the present and potential markets. This included identifying why visitors travel to the Nechako region, where they are from, when they visit, and what they look for once they've arrived. Through identifying the above visitor characteristics, the Tourism Task Force could make sound decisions.

In total, seven tourism products were considered by the Tourism Task Force in the ranking process: independent business and conferences; touring visitors; visiting friends and relatives; seasonal residents; outdoor, sport and adventure; festivals and events; and group tours. The top five tourism products were ranked and are shown in Exhibit 6.1.

6.2 Primary Markets

The products offered in the Nechako Development Region attract five major markets: the touring visitor; outdoor, sport and enthusiasts; friends and relatives; those travelling for business reasons; and those travelling to festivals and events. The following is a look at the primary markets that participate in products available within the Nechako region.

Touring

Regional Circle Tours

Primary Markets:
- Rubber-tire (RV, camper, auto)
- Fully independent traveller (FIT):
    - Excursionist (arrive and depart the same day)
    - Pacific Northwest (close-in market)
    - Seniors

Intraprovincial Circle Tours

Primary Markets:
- Group tour:
    - Motor Coach
- Rubber-tire (RV, camper, auto):
    - Pacific Northwest (close-in market)
- Seniors

Exhibit 6.1

Ranked Market Profiles

TRAVEL GENERATOR	WHERE ARE THEY FROM?	WHEN DO THEY COME HERE?	WHAT SERVICES DO THEY LOOK FOR?
RANK #1 Touring	B.C. Out of Province	Primarily summer	Food, gas and repairs, accommodation
RANK #2 Outdoor, Sport and Adventure	B.C. Out of Province	Summer Year-round	Lodges, food, gas, guiding, retail
RANK #3 Visiting Friends and Relatives	B.C. Out of Province	Primarily summer Year-round	Accommodation, food, gas, retail
RANK #4 Independent Business, Meetings and Conferences	Regional B.C.	Year-round	Accommodation, meeting facilities, airports
RANK #5 Festivals and Events	Regional B.C.	Summer Winter	Food, gas, lodging

Note: This ranking was compiled by the members of the Nechako Tourism Task Force based on personal knowledge of tourism activities in their communities and throughout the region.

Outdoor, Sport and Adventure

Guide-Outfitting

Primary Markets:
- Hunter
- Male travelling alone:
    - United States
    - Overseas
- Non-hunter:
    - Alberta
    - B.C. resident

Freshwater Sportfishing

Primary Market:
- B.C. resident

Winter Activities

Primary Markets:
- Regional excursionist
- B.C. resident

Backcountry Recreation

Primary Markets:
- United States
- Overseas

Midcountry Recreation

Primary Markets:
- Touring FIT
- Regional excursionist

River Rafting

Primary Markets:
- Short day-trips:
    - Regional resident
- Multi-day trips:
    - United States
    - Europe

Wilderness Park Areas

Primary Markets:
- Pacific Northwest:
    - Backpackers
    - Wilderness adventurers

Meetings, Conferences, and Independent Business

Primary Markets:
- Regional companies, associations and groups

Visiting Friends and Relatives

Primary Markets:
- Friends and relatives:
    - Ontario
    - Other Canada

Festivals and Events

Primary Markets:
- Regional resident
- Touring FIT

6.3 *Main Purpose for Travel*

*Visitor '89 A Travel Survey of Visitors to British Columbia: North by Northwest Tourism Region** revealed that the main purpose for visiting the North by Northwest Tourism Region (the vast majority of the Nechako Development Region falls within its boundaries) was touring, at 43 per cent. This was followed by visiting friends and relatives, at 32 per cent, and outdoors/wilderness/adventure trips, at 14 per cent. Of the visitors touring in the region, 37 per cent said they were just passing through, while 30 per cent indicated they were en route to Alaska.

Exhibits 6.2 and 6.3 compare tourism industry statistics for the North by Northwest Tourism Region with those for the province.

* Visitor '89 data involved surveying travellers arriving in B.C. at major highway, airport and marine entry points. The data collection process involved a short screening interview; the distribution of travel diaries to qualified tourists and excursionists; followedup by in-depth telephone interviews.

Exhibit 6.2

Main Purpose for Travel

	B.C. Resident Per Cent		Non-B.C. Resident Per Cent	
	NXNW	PROV.	NXNW	PROV.
Conference	4	3	2	6
Other Business	13	9	5	11
VFR*/Personal	43	37	32	33
Touring	7	7	43	26
City	7	7	2	3
Outdoors	19	20	14	8

Sources: *Visitor '89 A Travel Survey of Visitors to British Columbia: North by Northwest Tourism Region*, and the *1989 B.C. Resident Study*.

* Visiting friends or relatives.

6.4 Visitor Origin

The most important B.C. visitor comes from within the North by Northwest Tourism Region, and accounts for 35 per cent of the resident, overnight traffic within the NXNW Tourism Region.

Of the non-resident market, the North by Northwest Tourism Region is of greatest appeal to Americans, who account for 46 per cent of the non-resident, overnight traffic to the NXNW Tourism Region.

Exhibit 6.3

Visitor Origin

B.C. Resident		Non-B.C. Resident	
	Per Cent		Per Cent
Vancouver Island	5	Alberta	19
Southwest	28	Ontario	6
Okanagan	3	Other Canada	10
Kootenays	1	Washington	8
Thompson	3	Oregon	5
Cariboo	8	California	10
NXNW	35	Other West USA	11
Peace River	17	Other USA	12
		Overseas	19

Sources: *Visitor '89 A Travel Survey of Visitors to British Columbia: North by Northwest Tourism Region*, and the *1989 B.C. Resident Study*.

6.5 *Visitor Characteristics*

Travel within British Columbia by residents of British Columbia has a very significant impact on the provincial tourism industry. Resident travel represents 67 per cent of visitor volume and 52 per cent of total revenues.

Statistics for non-resident travel in the NXNW Tourism Region indicate that visitors prefer the summer season (44 per cent), followed by spring (25 per cent), fall (14 per cent), and winter (seven per cent); travel more frequently; and take shorter trips. These statistics have been drawn from *Visitor '89 A Travel Survey of Visitors to British Columbia: North by Northwest Tourism Region.*

Exhibit 6.4

Visitor Travel Characteristics

	B.C. Resident (North*)	Non-B.C. Resident (NXNW Tourism Region)
Average Party Size		2.45
Average Daily Per Person Expenditure	$80.54	$49.54
Average Length of Stay (nights)	5.03	3.77
Person-Trips	1,122,000	452,376
Total Overnight Revenue		$96 Million

* Comprises the North by Northwest and Peace River Alaska Highway tourism regions.

Sources: *Resident Travel in British Columbia* and *Visitor '89 A Travel Survey of Visitors to British Columbia: North by Northwest Region.*

7.0 Public Input

Public response to the discussion paper and the community meetings was excellent. In total, 291 residents participated in the public input process. Of that number, 245 participants attended the community tourism planning meetings, and 46 participants submitted a written response.

Exhibit 7.1 is a summary of the opportunities and constraints as identified through the public response process. For a detailed account of the community input, refer to Appendix A.

Exhibit 7.1

Summary of Community-Identified Opportunities and Constraints

Opportunities	ATLIN	BURNS LAKE	CASSIAR	DEASE LAKE	FT ST JAMES	FRASER LAKE	GRANISLE	HOUSTON	ISKUT	SMITHERS	TELEGRAPH CR	TELKWA	VANDERHOOF
Increase regional promotions	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•
Further develop and increase promotion of regional geography, history and culture	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Map historic and geographic sites		•				•							
Publicize highway improvements				•									
Create additional festivals and events	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•
Increase number of outdoor, sport and adventure activities available	•		•	•	•		•		•		•		
Improve highway design		•											
Increase packaged and non-packaged tours	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•
Increase accommodations	•	•	•		•				•		•		
Increase services to the visitor			•	•	•	•	•						•
Target seasonal residents	•	•			•	•				•		•	
Create a park on Dease Lake				•									
Start equipment rental business		•		•		•	•						
Co-ordinate and promote regional arts and crafts	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•
Design and promote special-interest retreats	•	•										•	
Package existing attractions, accommodations and services						•					•		
Package winter products and events		•		•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•

Opportunities	ATLIN	BURNS LAKE	CASSIAR	DEASE LAKE	FT ST JAMES	FRASER LAKE	GRANISLE	HOUSTON	ISKUT	SMITHERS	TELEGRAPH CR	TELKWA	VANDERHOOF
Become the northern centre				•									
Target marketing		•			•	•							
Increase number of attractions and/or extend operating hours		•		•	•	•	•			•		•	•
Improve InfoCentres	•				•	•	•	•		•		•	•
Accommodate the mobility-impaired market	•		•	•	•		•			•		•	•
Adopt the LID program				•									
Increase traffic				•									
Develop theme or logo	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•
Note: Refer to Appendix A for detailed responses.													

Constraints	ATLIN	BURNS LAKE	CASSIAR	DEASE LAKE	FT ST JAMES	FRASER LAKE	GRANISLE	HOUSTON	ISKUT	SMITHERS	TELEGRAPH CR	TELKWA	VANDERHOOF
Road conditions	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Lack of highway pull-outs						•	•					•	
Provincial representation	•	•	•		•					•		•	
Geographic location	•					•							•
Lack of community organization or body	•		•	•							•	•	
Native negotiations	•	•	•						•	•	•	•	
Marketing of the region needs to be increased	•				•	•		•					•
Lack of co-operation among stakeholders at all levels	•		•			•		•	•	•	•		•
Need for proper telephone service									•				
Limited access to Crown lands			•	•							•		
Limited access to parks				•					•				
Seasonal residents	•			•									
Transient residents				•									
Shortage of human resources	•	•		•	•	•				•	•		
Government requirements too sophisticated	•			•						•			
Prince George InfoCentre	•		•	•					•		•		
Fort St. John InfoCentre									•				
Don't have an InfoCentre			•	•							•		
Quality and quantity of facilities	•	•	•	•	•		•		•	•	•	•	
Need for airstrip or upgrading	•					•	•				•		
Need for improved signage program	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Community meetings process								•					

Constraints	ATLIN	BURNS LAKE	CASSIAR	DEASE LAKE	FT ST JAMES	FRASER LAKE	GRANISLE	HOUSTON	ISKUT	SMITHERS	TELEGRAPH CR	TELKWA	VANDERHOOF
Tourism education	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Lack attractions													•
Need to strengthen lines of communication at all levels		•	•	•	•		•			•	•	•	•
Region lacks unity		•											
The ten-dollar tourist					•								
Company owned town			•										
Open-pit mine tours not available			•										
Poor research data	•	•	•		•	•	•			•	•		•
Residents are comfortable								•					
Lack entrepreneurial spirit								•				•	
High costs	•	•	•	•		•			•	•	•	•	•
Limited tax base	•												
Lack of banking services				•									
Lack of government funding	•		•	•	•				•	•	•	•	•
Deficient access to financing for tourism ventures	•		•	•	•		•		•	•	•	•	•
Over-zealous tourists								•					
Foreign investors										•			
Licensing requirements						•							•
Resource-use conflicts		•		•	•	•	•			•		•	
Environmental degradation and visitor erosion	•	•				•				•	•	•	•
Protection of remote historic and rare geographic sites difficult to monitor	•	•											•

Constraints	ATLIN	BURNS LAKE	CASSIAR	DEASE LAKE	FT ST JAMES	FRASER LAKE	GRANISLE	HOUSTON	ISKUT	SM ITHERS	TELEGRAPH CR	TELKWA	VANDERHOOF
Regional boundaries should be changed	•		•	•		•			•	•	•	•	•
Need an improved transportation network	•			•							•		
Poor co-ordination of regional transportation network		•											
Management of Via Rail	•	•	•		•	•							
Community residents indifferent	•	•		•			•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Poor co-ordination of regional festivals and events		•					•		•		•		
Other infrastructure limitations	•												

Note: Refer to Appendix A for detailed responses.

PART II

Nechako Tourism Development Strategy

8.0 Nechako Tourism Strategy

8.1 Rationale

The Tourism Task Force representatives participated in a workshop designed to select regional strategies following the proven Community Tourism Action Plan process.

First, the region's assets were identified and categorized under attractions, promotions, infrastructure, services, and hospitality. The next step involved ranking the identified assets. The results are shown in Exhibit 8.1.

Using the ranked assets as a guide, the task force identified and ranked the region's opportunities and constraints (Exhibit 8.2). The identified opportunities and constraints are based on input collected in the communities.

The ranked opportunities and constraints were then referred to in selecting the priority recommendations (Exhibit 8.3).

8.2 Objectives

Based on the information gathered at the community meetings, interviews and secondary sources, the following objectives were identified:

- to strengthen and diversify the region's resource-extraction-based economy through increasing the economic value of tourism;
- to give priority to tourism development opportunities that would help to maintain or enhance the present quality of life for regional residents; and
- to create a healthy, resource-sensitive tourism industry that is well-matched to market trends and will remain competitive in the long term.

Exhibit 8.1

Regional Assets

Category	Rank	Regional Assets
Attractions	1	Natural resources
	2	Abundance of wildlife
	3	Festivals and events
	4	Heritage and cultural sites and museums
	5	Wilderness areas, lakes, rivers, waterfalls, back-country
Promotions	1	Word of mouth
	2	North by Northwest Tourism Association
	3	Tourism British Columbia
	4	Tourism North
	5	Yukon and Alaska publications
Infrastructure	1	Highway #16
	2	Highway #37
	3	Extensive network of backroads
	4	Municipal recreation facilities
	5	Municipal airports
Services	1	Wide variety of accommodations: hotels, motels, campgrounds...
	2	Automobile and RV repair and supply
	3	Retail services throughout urban areas of the region
	4	Variety of restaurants
	5	Guiding and hunting services (consumptive and non-consumptive)
Hospitality	1	Friendly people
	2	Friendly staff
	3	SuperHost, Encore

Exhibit 8.2

Regional Opportunities and Constraints

Category	Rank*	Opportunities and Constraints
Attractions	1AOC	Resource-use management planning
	2AOC	Region lacks unity or common goal
	3AOC	Need to identify and map historic and rare geographic sites; Develop regional history
	4AOC	Co-ordinate and create additional festivals and events
Promotions	1POC	Strengthen lines of communication between InfoCentres, NXNWTA, all levels of government and industry; Promote regional history and culture
	2POC	Community apathy; Lack of community pride
	3POC	Develop local and regional packages (non-wholesale)
	4POC	Increase regional promotions (co-operative advertising); Poor research data; NXNW Tourism Association needs additional funding
	5POC	Need to further develop and increase promotions of circle tours
Infrastructure	1IOC	Poor road conditions
	2IOC	Improve highway signage policies and rules
	3IOC	Lack of highway information pull-outs
	4IOC	Highway design
	5IOC	Location and design of highway pull-outs
Services	1SOC	Accommodate the mobility-impaired market; Deficient access to financing for tourism ventures; Upgrade existing services
	2SOC	High costs; e.g., GST, gas prices, insurance...
	3SOC	Increase outdoor opportunities and products
	4SOC	Increase tours; e.g., industrial, cultural, historic
Hospitality	1HOC	Educate the broad community regarding the positive impacts of tourism
	2HOC	Increase hospitality and human-resource training

*Code: The "Rank" column refers to the Ranking, Category, Opportunities and Constraints columns; e.g., 1AOC translates to: 1 = ranked #1; A = under the Attractions Category; OC = Opportunities and Constraints column

Exhibit 8.3

Recommendations in Order of Priority

Priority	Issue	Based on Ranked Opportunities and Constraints (Exhibit 8.2)
#1	Strengthen lines of communication	Promotions 1POC
#2	Ensure that tourism values receive due consideration in any resource-use planning	Attractions 1AOC
#3	Increase the awareness of the positive impacts of tourism	Hospitality 1HOC
#4	Address financing and incentives for tourism ventures	Services 1SOC
#5	Encourage improved access to tourism facilities	Services 1SOC
#6	Improve tourism services throughout the Nechako region	Services 1SOC
#7	Erect tourism information signs at current and future highway pull-outs	Infrastructure 3IOC
#8	Identify and adopt a common regional identity	Attractions 2AOC
#9	Increase tourism visitor revenues through the development of regional and local activity and tour packages	Promotions 3POC
#10	Increase the quality of service to our visitor	Hospitality 2HOC
#11	Identify and prepare an overview of the heritage and cultural attractions and resources within the region	Attractions 3AOC
#12	Improve highway signage policies and rules	Infrastructure 2IOC
#13	Increase the number of outdoor opportunities and products	Services 3SOC
#14	Improve marketing services and regional promotions	Promotions 4POC

8.3 *Pre-eminent Issues*

Three umbrella issues have a major impact on the tourism industry in the Nechako Region: Native land claims, the high costs of travelling in the region, and poor road conditions.

The Tourism Task Force strongly recommends that these three issues become top priorities of the Government of British Columbia. Decisions related to these issues must be made only after a consideration of their impact on the tourism industry.

It is beyond the scope of the Tourism Task Force to address the above issues. However, the task force recommends that the Nechako Regional Advisory Council take them to cabinet for action.

8.3.1 Native Land Claims

Generally speaking, any business contains an element of risk. The uncertainty of Native land claims adds the risk of structurally altering the land tenure and resource privileges. Until Native land claims are settled, the potential for tourism development dependant on the land and resources will want for certainty. Many potential investors will refrain from investing until the uncertainty of land tenure and resource issues are resolved.

Another aspect of the land claims issue is the general perception of its impact on tourism activity in any given area. The potential for transportation disruption arising from demonstrations, blockades, etc. will most certainly influence a traveller's choice of destination. Therefore, until the land claims issue is resolved, its inhibiting effect on tourism development will remain.

8.3.2 High Costs

Tourism operators throughout the region have expressed concern over the high prices associated with travelling within the region. Customers most resent the high price of gas and having to pay the GST. The high cost of air travel, food and beverage, and other retail goods are other factors that discourage travel to the region.

In anticipation of high costs, the touring visitor travels in well-stocked, self-contained RV units. One can easily see that if unreasonable charges (GST) and the perception that goods and services are grossly overpriced persist, the wallet of the visitor will close, leaving the residents of the region and province to pick up the tab for infrastructure maintenance and improvements.

It seems ironic that, on average, tourism revenues across Canada were down seven per cent in 1991--the same year as the introduction of the seven per cent GST. Currently, the visitor to Canada must apply for a GST rebate. The present system is costly and time-consuming. Perhaps a more acceptable system would be a point-of-sale rebate, under which the visitor would not be financially affected by the GST.

8.3.3 Road Conditions

The region's tourism development potential is directly linked to the condition of Highway 16 and, particularly, Highway 37. *Visitor '89* identified "touring" as the main reason for travelling within the region. Of the visitors touring in the region, 37 per cent said they were just passing through, while 30 per cent indicated they were en route to Alaska. "Submissions are on file with the Nechako Transportation Committee from caravan tour operators in the United States, indicating their refusal to use Highway 37 unless it is upgraded. One operator, who took tours of 25 to 35 vans at a time to the Yukon, indicated a preference for the scenic beauty of Highway 37, but noted he could not subject vehicles which cost any where from $30,000 to $200,000 to the pot-holes of Highway 37" (Nechako Transportation Committee Recommendations, June 1989) and the Atlin Provincial Highway 7. The above examples reinforce the link between potential tourism development and the condition of the highway system. Upgrading of all the major highways would have one of the most positive impacts on tourism development in the region.

Road conditions emerged as a primary concern at every community tourism planning meeting. Specifically mentioned was the need for a paved or chip-sealed surface to eliminate the hazard of blinding dust and gravel and pot-hole damage that is currently experienced by the visitor travelling Highway 37 and the Atlin Provincial Highway. In addition, there was an overall concern about the general deterioration of Highway 16.

The Nechako Tourism Task Force recognizes the work completed by the Nechako Transportation Committee and the Ministry of Transportation and Highways. One project slated for completion during 1991 was the chip-seal and/or paving of 100 kilometres of Highway 37.

8.4 Recommendations

Based on the results of the community tourism planning meetings, individual meetings and secondary sources, 75 categories of regional tourism opportunities and constraints were identified. In a workshop session with the Tourism Task Force, these opportunities and constraints were evaluated and priorized to identify 14 regional tourism development strategies. As projects are completed, the list of opportunities and constraints will be reviewed to select identifying new strategies for implementation.

Priority #1 Strengthen Lines of Communication

This priority refers to the lack of communication between the various levels of government, communities and operators.

There is a lack of communication and therefore, a lack of collaboration amongst operators within the region. The individual operators need to recognize that their stiffest competition comes from outside the region--for example, Hawaii or the Lower Mainland--and not from the operator down the road. An 'area' promotion would offer a more complete and interesting product, resulting in an increased ability to draw visitors into the region. Everyone would benefit.

The communities within the region suffer from the same fear of competition. Each community should recognize that it offers a uniquely different experience to the visitor.

The various levels of government should better co-ordinate their information-gathering and research efforts, and eliminate the amount of overlap that is presently taking place. Overlap is costly, and exhausting. For example, the public input process is wearing thin; they are tired of answering the same questions, for different groups, time and time again.

Recommendations

1. The present Nechako Tourism Task Force should carry on to communicate and co-ordinate the implementation of the strategy.

2. Representatives from each of the regional tourism task forces should meet periodically to share their successes and failures.

3. A common regional vision or identity that would unite the region should be established.

Methodology

1. Through the media and the task force, introduce the strategy and identified projects to the region.

2. Produce a quarterly Nechako Tourism Progress Report (newsletter). NXNW Tourism Association could become involved in the production and/or distribution of such a report (it should be kept in mind that NXNW Tourism Association distributes primarily to their members).

3. Increase media relations. When a project gets under way, when a success is achieved, etc., a press release should be sent out. Follow the excellent example set by the forest industry. Continually publicize the number of jobs generated by tourism and the economic value of tourism to the region.

4. Deliver presentations to sector associations, chambers of commerce, InfoCentres and other development and tourism regions.

5. Hold regional meetings and conferences. The purpose could be twofold: it could build regional unity and from that a vision, and it could be a perfect opportunity to share and build on existing industry knowledge.

6. Support and work as a partner with the provincial government.

7. Increase communications between InfoCentres.

Priority #2 Ensure the Tourism Industry Receives Due Consideration in Resource-Use Planning

The region's outstanding natural resources are its greatest assets. Land-use conflicts are a major constraint to the development of these assets. Tourism should be represented at the negotiating table on an equal footing with other resource-based industries. An integrated resource management plan that recognizes the value of the tourism industry would minimize the potential conflicts that could arise between the various user-groups.

Recommendations

1. All current plans (such as B.C. Parks 90) should be circulated to other resource-based industries.

2. Central clearing houses should be established for document distribution. The most appropriate location for these clearing houses would be in the Government Agent offices. To a degree, Government Agents already provide the service.

3. The provincial government should produce a list of **all** current government documents and publications, and update it on a regular basis. The public should be made aware of the existence of this list.

4. A regional land-use strategy should be prepared in co-ordination with other resource-users. This is a huge task and should be approached as a pilot project. The Tourism Resource Planning Branch of the Ministry of Tourism should provide direction and support.

5. The public should be made more aware of tourism as a resource-dependent industry.

Methodology

1. Inventory the areas that have high tourism potential and existing tourism operations.

2. Through consultation with resource planners, integrate tourism into the resource-use management planning process.

3. Hold public meetings regarding tourism and the resource.

4. Network; for example, in an attempt to reach a larger audience, arrange to have special guest speakers at resource-use and natural-environment-related functions.

5. Increase media relations and produce a tourism newsletter.

Priority #3 Increase the Awareness of the Positive Impacts of Tourism

The positive impacts of the tourism industry are not well-understood by the members of the communities. For example, a business that has three employees during the summer and only one employee during the winter is experiencing the positive impacts of tourism. The community has to realize that you don't have to be a guide and outfitter or a tour operator to be in the tourism business.

Tourism has other positive impacts on the community. Facilities, infrastructure improvements, festivals and events, and new products can be enjoyed by both the resident and the visitor.

Recommendations

1. The retail sector needs to be made aware of the positive impacts tourism has on their businesses.

2. An annual regional tourism trade show should be co-ordinated. Later expansion could result in a northern trade show (Nechako, North Coast and Northeast Regions).

3. Participation in community and regional consumer trade shows should be encouraged.

4. Tourism generates tax dollars and creates jobs within the region. This should be documented and publicized.

5. The importance of hard economic data needs to be impressed upon the operators of tourism-sector businesses. Tourism businesses should be encouraged to participate in initiatives such as the Satellite Account: Economic Tourism Project.

6. The development of additional regional and community festivals and events should be encouraged.

Methodology

1. Use support from the Ministry of Economic Development, Small Business and Trade for economic data collection.

2. Develop a regional trade show, with the assistance of the NXNW Tourism Association.

3. Co-ordinate a northern tourism trade show, through the co-operative marketing program Tourism North.

4. Use the media. For example, approach the newspapers with the idea of submitting a weekly column: Did you know tourism..., and continue to send out press releases.

5. Encourage high schools to add the Pacific Rim Institute of Tourism (PRIT) program Careers in Tourism and other recognized tourism programs to the courses currently available. Tourism is British Columbia's largest employer, yet its presence in the high school and elementary school curricula is scarce to non-existent.

Priority #4A Address Financing for Tourism Ventures

There are numerous solid opportunities in the Nechako that could be developed to meet the demand. In many cases, development is hampered by the lack of available funding.

Sources of funding for tourism ventures include: institutional lenders such as banks, credit unions, etc.; private investors; and, to a lesser extent, government. Tourism ventures typically have a difficult time accessing capital assistance from traditional sources. This is particularly true for the small-scale tourism operator.

Recommendations

1. Community investment initiatives (venture capital corporations) should be created. These community investment initiatives could offer both financing and management expertise.

2. Government should provide research and financial support in the development of feasibility and (government-required) environmental studies.

3. Government should assist in the preparation of business plans.

4. Available business development programs should be inventoried.

5. The financing issue should be addressed in partnership with the provincial government.

6. Ways to assist financing ventures should be investigated, in co-ordination with the Regional Advisory Council.

7. Present and potential operators should be made more aware of the sources of funding that exist.

Methodology

1. Pursue community investment initiative (venture capital corporations) pilot project.

2. Through the Product Development Branch of the Ministry of Tourism, identify existing business development programs and notify the public that these programs are available.

3. Provide business proposal review services, through the Ministry of Economic Development, Small Business and Trade. Special attention should be given to assessing whether or not adequate financing for the venture has been secured before the entrepreneur is encouraged to proceed with development.

4. Meet with financial institutions to review lending requirements and determine how tourism applications could obtain a higher rate of approval.

5. Produce a handbook called How to Finance Your Tourism Idea.

Priority #4B Address Financial Incentives for Tourism Ventures

The tourism industry within the Nechako is largely made up of small-scale operators. Currently, private-sector operators encounter difficulties when trying to secure financing for small-scale tourism ventures.

In the past, financial incentives for world-class destination projects have been available under the Tourism Development Agreement. Incentives targeting the small-scale operator have not been available. The introduction of financial incentives for small-scale operators could stimulate private tourism business activity within the region.

Recommendations

1. Financial incentives for small-scale tourism operators should be introduced.

2. All existing programs that offer financial incentives to private-sector ventures should be identified.

3. Government could offer income tax incentives.

Methodology

1. Lobby government for small-scale tourism industry government guarantees and loans. These guarantees and loans could be on a performance scale; for example, based on the operation's performance, loans could be upgraded to forgivable loans and grants.

2. Push for legislative changes to allow for financial incentives such as income tax incentives, guarantees, loans and grants.

3. Send a letter from government to existing operators, informing them about "what's new in financing and incentives for your tourism business."

Priority #5 Encourage Improved Access for the Mobility-Impaired

Many people are mobility-impaired in some way. Mobility-impaired does not necessarily mean that one is confined to a wheelchair. For example, a parent pushing a baby carriage, a person in a wheelchair, and an elderly person with reduced agility are all mobility-impaired. In many cases, the elderly, the disabled and young families have the same requirements.

The touring visitor to the region tends to be older and the age of the resident population is relatively low. Most activities and facilities in the region assume a moderate to high level of agility. Improvements in access to facilities and the development of soft adventure activities would benefit both the visitor and the resident.

Recommendations

1. Tourism businesses should be educated about the needs of the mobility-impaired market and the potential size that market.

2. Infrastructure deficiencies should be inventoried.

Methodology

1. Co-ordinate with Tourism Industry Services, Ministry of Economic Development, Small Business and Trade and their efforts towards "access for all."

2. Work with Premier's Council for Persons with Disabilities.

Priority #6 Improve Tourism Services Throughout the Nechako Region

Tourism services (or support elements) can include health care facilities, Visitor InfoCentres, grocery stores, accommodations and campgrounds, restaurants, banking services, airports, public transportation and gas stations.

Visitors to the region have the right to expect a certain level of accommodation when they visit an establishment with an Approved Accommodation sign. The present Approved Accommodation inspection system has not been effective. Inspections are not frequent enough and standards are too low. The sign no longer represents a guaranteed level of accommodation.

The Nechako portion of Highway 37 does not have one Visitor InfoCentre. In Dease Lake, B.C., Parks gets up to 40 persons a day requesting visitor information. Both Dease Lake and Cassiar have expressed an interest in opening northern InfoCentres. All they require is an InfoCentre flag and northern information.

Banking services along Highway 37 are nonexistent. For the visitor low on cash and credit, this is a major concern. Business owners (and residents) along Highway 37 have problems obtaining financing because of the distance between the operation and the financial institution.

Recommendations

1. The Ministry of Tourism should ensure that accommodations listed in the Accommodations Guide are inspected on an ongoing basis.

2. Existing services and gaps in services currently available should be inventoried.

3. The Tourism Development Handbook should be updated.

4. A financial institution should be encouraged to locate in Dease Lake.

5. Delivery of services should be improved (see Priority #10).

6. A regional bed-and-breakfast registry should be established. Standards that registrants would be required to meet should be established.

7. A regional "clean up, fix up, paint up" campaign should be initiated.

Methodology

1. Build a service inventory, starting with the already-gathered Smithers-area inventory.

2. Gather input from operators, and review existing research and NXNW data.

3. Locate an InfoCentre in Dease Lake.

4. Inspect accommodations on an annual basis. Have these inspections done by an official from Victoria.

5. Locate Government Agent (GA) office in Dease Lake. This office should provide banking services for residents as well as visitors.

6. Form a subcommittee to setup and promote the bed-and-breakfast registry.

7. Lobby for legislation to allow the paid listing of bed-and-breakfast registries in the B.C. Accommodation Guide.

Priority #7 Locate Area Tourism Information Signs in Current and Future Highway Pull-outs and Rest Stops

Highway pull-outs and rest stops offer varying levels of facilities for touring visitors. Some provide a place for travellers to pull over and dispose of trash, while other sites have picnic tables and restroom facilities. Because many people stop at these sites, they offer a perfect opportunity to promote area activities and facilities.

Recommendations

1. Specific signage needs should be identified.

2. These area signs should avoid confusing the visitor with the various regional boundaries. To eliminate this problem, signs could identify with the North by Northwest Tourism Region and acknowledge that the sign is a result of Nechako Tourism Task Force efforts, with funding provided by the Nechako Development Region.

3. Strategic pull-out sites that would be ideal for area information signs, such as the Topley - Granisle junction, should be identified.

Methodology

1. Generate support from the area's business community.

2. Take advantage of the funding made available through the Downtown Revitalization Program and build strategic area information signs.

3. Co-ordinate with the Nechako Transportation Committee and the Ministry of Transportation and Highways to assist in identifying strategic pull-outs and rest stops, and to help establish guide-lines for these area signs.

Priority #8 Identify and Adopt a Common Regional Identity

Though each community is unique and has something different to offer the traveller, there are commonalities throughout the Nechako region. A regional theme would afford these communities the opportunity to present the traveller with an overall regional experience. A clear, unique, creative and credible theme would foster regional unification and produce an effective marketing tool.

Recommendations

1. A "Theme Identification" breakout session should be held at the NXNW annual general meeting.

2. Cultural and natural resources should be reviewed, and themes identified, through the community input process (Appendix A).

3. Community adoption of the regional concept should be encouraged.

Methodology

1. Form a theme development committee. Refer to Appendix E for guide-lines on how to identify a regional theme.

2. Initiate regional discussions through the presentation of the Nechako Tourism Development Strategy.

3. Submit a column for use in chamber of commerce newsletters.

4. Increase media relations.

5. Recruit village councils as promoters of a common regional identity.

6. Network fax regional updates.

Priority #9 Increase Visitor Revenues Through the Development of Regional and Local Activity Packages

One way to increase visitor revenues is through the development of activity, theme and tour packages. Packages would increase visitor appeal, extend their length of stay, and ultimately increase their expenditures.

Packaging brings attractions, facilities and services together to be sold for one price. Packages are popular because vacation planning is made easier, quality is usually controlled by the various components of the package, and purchasing all the components of the package in a single transaction is convenient.

Recommendations

1. The region should be divided into theme areas which should be packaged as destination travel generators. Each theme area should link with the theme areas.

2. Training sessions on effective packaging should be held.

3. The development of inbound tour operators should be encouraged.

4. Potential theme areas should be identified and packaged.

5. Existing activity, theme and tour packages should be inventoried and mapped.

6. A series of "community pride" packages should be designed. These would package a day of the best the community has to offer.

7. Packages should be sold through local InfoCentres and or chambers of commerce.

Methodology

1. Conduct a pilot project to establish and package theme areas. For example, Vanderhoof, Fort St. James and Fort Fraser could team together and promote the rich history the area has to offer. Fort St. James has the National Historic Park, Vanderhoof offers it's pioneering history, and Fort Fraser could promote the driving of the last railroad spike. Themed areas would offer the visitor a more interesting product, a reason to lengthen their stay in the area and region. Refer to Appendix A to assist in identifying theme areas.

2. Contact the Development Branch, Ministry of Tourism, regarding regulations and requirements to become an inbound tour operator.

3. Conduct a series of workshops and seminars with communities and operators.

4. Work with local chambers and associations to package local opportunities.

Priority #10 Increase the Quality of Service to Our Visitors

Hospitality refers to the way services are delivered and the general attitude of the residents. Making the visitor feel welcome is what hospitality and quality service are all about.

Quality services are the result of a well-trained staff that is knowledgeable and pleasant when dealing with customers. Hospitality training is aimed at motivating persons in contact with visitors (and residents) to be hospitable in their dealings. Satisfied tourists will be more inclined to stay longer, and tell their friends about the enjoyable time they experienced.

Recommendations

1. Delivery of the "Owner/Manager/Staff Hospitality Training Program" (Okanagan College/CEIC) should be encouraged.

2. The availability of different hospitality-related training programs should be inventoried.

3. Increased participation in SuperHost, Encore, Food Safe, Serve it Right... programs should be encouraged.

4. The Pacific Rim Institute of Tourism should be encouraged to develop a two-year regionally available college program.

5. The communities along the touring corridors should work together to further develop services and attractions that will improve the quality of the regional touring product.

Methodology

1. Review NXNW region visitor demand data.

2. Inventory available courses and schedules.

3. Implement enhanced training programs.

4. Have local associations or chambers of commerce encourage new businesses to list in the Accommodation Guide.

Priority #11 Identify and Prepare an Overview of the Heritage, Cultural and Natural Resources in the Region

The Nechako region offers a rich combination of history (see Section 5.3 of this report), culture and natural resources. The identification and development of these resources would make the region more appealing to both visitor and resident.

Recommendations

1. A heritage and cultural inventory should be prepared.

2. Co-ordination with North Coast region should occur to ensure that the inventory is complete. The two regions should be linked together.

3. Rules that ensure the protection and preservation of known heritage resources should be designed.

4. The heritage and cultural product should be developed in partnership with Native groups.

Methodology

1. Contact the B.C. Heritage Trust regarding projects that qualify for funding.

2. Form a heritage subcommittee to assemble the inventory by reviewing the provincial archives and contacting local groups and societies. The subcommittee should then make recommendations for development.

3. Contact B.C. Parks regarding the slide-show presentations they give at provincial parks. Find out whether these slide-shows could be made available to tourism operators and private campground operators.

4. Encourage community historical and heritage societies to develop videos and make them available to tourism operators.

Priority #12 Improve Highway Signage

For the most part, the new signage system in place is an improvement over past sign programs. Highways in British Columbia were littered with signs and billboards. However, with the introduction of the new sign program, too many signs were eliminated. For example, distance signs are spaced too far apart, directional signs are poor, and point of interest signs are too close to the pull-out.

Recommendations

1. Existing and potential highway sign problems should be identified.

2. The possibility of modifying the highway sign policies and rules to reflect the uniqueness of the north--particularly Highway 37--should be investigated.

3. Higher profiles should be given to communities that are located off the major highways.

4. It should be made easier for the visitor to locate Highway 37.

5. The next three communities should be listed on mileage signs and these should be installed at more frequent intervals.

6. Compliance with policies and rules should be enforced.

7. A "one-of-a-kind" sign policy that makes allowances for creativity should be introduced.

8. Inconsistencies in the blue-and-white sign program should be identified.

Methodology

1. Review community input (Appendix A) to identify sign problems and inconsistencies.

2. Conduct a sign impact study, then discuss a pilot project with the ministries of Tourism, and Transportation and Highways, and the Nechako Transportation Committee.

3. Recommend "one-of-a-kind" sign design requirements to the ministries of Tourism, and Transportation and Highways. Along Highway 37, these signs could become attractions in themselves.

4. Install tourism information signs at the turn-off to Atlin and Granisle, and relocate the information sign at the turn-off to Fort St. James.

5. Request that the Ministry of Transportation and Highways install an overhead directional sign on Highway 97 (at the junction of Highway 16 and 97) identifying Highway 37 as the "Scenic Route to Alaska."

6. Install "2 km advance warning" signs so that travellers have ample time to prepare for the turn.

7. To reduce the confusion over what businesses qualify for a blue-and-white sign, publish the provincial and the northern remote-area highway-sign policies.

Priority #13 Increase the Number of Outdoor Opportunities and Products

The Nechako region possesses an exceptional assortment of world-class wilderness and outdoor opportunities. At the same time, outdoor and adventure travel is the fastest growing sector of the industry.

Most of the products available appeal to the hard adventurer. However, the trend is for "softer" adventures. Visitors are increasingly looking for activities that are less strenuous, but still adventurous in nature.

Recommendations

1. Existing and potential outdoor opportunities and products should be inventoried.

2. Existing and potential operators should be educated regarding the development of identified outdoor opportunities and products.

3. An effort should be made to support the products already available, by working with existing operators.

4. In co-ordination with other resource-users, a regional land-use strategy (see priority #2) should be prepared.

5. The report Adventure Travel in Western Canada: Product Development Strategy (Tourism Canada, September 1988) should be reviewed.

Methodology

1. Package existing products to offer a more complete product.

2. Encourage existing operators to make full use of available resources.

3. Work with the Pacific Rim Institute of Tourism to design a tourism-operator business-training program that could be offered through regional colleges and/or correspondence.

4. Package outdoor activities with the touring product. Provide the touring market with easily accessible activities that don't require a substantial commitment in time.

5. Assess government-funded marketing requirements.

6. Conduct an outdoor opportunity analysis and map the results.

Priority #14 Improve Marketing Services and Regional Promotions

At each of the community meetings, increased regional and community promotional activity was called for.

The entity currently serving the marketing needs of the region is the North by Northwest Tourism Association, a registered non-profit society. It is funded through three main sources: an annual contract with the Ministry of Economic Development, Small Business and Trade; membership dues; and a five per cent administration fee built into all Partner in Tourism promotional campaigns.

At the community level, marketing initiatives are undertaken by the local chambers of commerce, sector associations, societies and local operators. These marketing initiatives are satisfactory to a degree, however, greater co-ordination with regional initiatives would result in a higher level of effectiveness.

Recommendations

1. The magnitude of regional and community marketing requirements should be assessed, based upon priorities identified in the Nechako Tourism Development Strategy.

2. Incremental funding requirements to meet assessed needs should be determined, in conjunction with existing marketing association activities.

3. Marketing strategies should be developed to coincide with priority implementation guide-lines.

Methodology

1. Direct tourism strategy implementation co-ordinator to provide an evaluation and report to the implementation committee.

9.0 Implementation Framework

Now that the strategy is complete, a framework for implementation needs to be established. This strategy is a living document and is to be used as a framework for tourism development within the region. The document should be reviewed and revised regularly, based on the completion of projects, newly identified trends, and changing opportunities and constraints.

As a first step towards action, the Economic Development Division of the Ministry of Economic Development, Small Business and Trade, and the Ministry of Tourism need to aggressively support the implementation of this strategy.

9.1 Regional Action Committee

The Nechako Tourism Task Force is very much committed to an action-based strategy. To fulfil this commitment, the task force has volunteered to become the regional action committee responsible for managing the implementation of the strategy. This decision was based on the task force's concern that each community be represented on the Nechako Tourism Action Committee.

9.2 Subcommittees

Operating under the direction of the regional action committee, subcommittees should be established with the mandate of co-ordinating the implementation of one or more specific priorities. These subcommittees should comprise one regional action committee representative plus the partners identified in Exhibit 9.1. It should be recognized at this time that the implementation of the strategy will be the responsibility of government, the private sector and the communities.

Exhibit 9.1

Partners in Implementation

Priority	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	#11	#12	#13	#14
Partners:														
Regional InfoNetwork Council	•													
Regional District	•							•				•		•
Communities and Municipalities	•	•	•		•	•	•	•		•		•		•
Resource Industries	•	•											•	
North by Northwest Tourism Association	•	•	•				•	•	•		•	•	•	•
Economic Development Division, MEDSBT	•				•		•	•	•	•		•	•	•
Tourism Division, MEDSBT	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•
Chambers of Commerce and Bureaus	•								•	•	•	•		•
Provincial/Federal Government	•	•	•	•		•							•	•
Sector Associations	•	•	•						•		•		•	•
Private Sector	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•
Ministry of Forests	•	•	•											
Community Resource Boards		•	•											
Visitors		•	•											
Regional Round Table		•	•											
Pacific Rim Institute of Tourism (PRIT)			•							•			•	
Banks and Credit Unions				•										
Venture Capital Corporation (VCC)				•									•	
Regional Advisory Council (RAC)				•									•	•

Priority	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	#11	#12	#13	#14
Partners:														
Western Diversification Program				•									•	
Federal Business Development Bank				•									•	
Prov. Council for Persons with Disabilities					•									
Yellowhead Highway Association							•	•				•		
Ministry of Transportation and Highways							•	•				•		
Nechako Transportation Committee							•					•		
Tour Wholesalers									•				•	
Consumer and Corporate Affairs									•					
Regional Colleges									•	•			•	
Employment and Immigration Canada (CEIC)										•				
Archaeology Branch											•			
Historical and Heritage Societies											•			
Universities											•			
Museums											•			
Native Bands and Tourism Associations											•		•	
Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs											•			
Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks											•		•	
Long-time Residents											•			
Heritage Trust Branch, MMARC											•			
NXNWTA Members														•

Priority	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	#11	#12	#13	#14
Partners:														
International Wholesalers														
·Business Information Centres (BIC)				•									•	

9.3 Potential Sources of Funding

Public Sector

Funding for regional priorities that relate to the public sector could be accessed through a refocusing of existing programs and budgets to accommodate, where possible, the task force's priority selection.

Implementation Co-ordinator

Implementation of the strategy is a sizable task that will involve a great deal of consultation and co-ordination. The Nechako Action Committee cannot be expected to tackle the job alone. They will require resource support and the assistance of an implementation co-ordinator.

This implementation co-ordinator would be required for a given period of time. Funding for such a position could come from the Ministry of Economic Development, Small Business and Trade.

Physical Development Component

Funding for the potential physical development involves drawing on the capital budgets of appropriate provincial ministries through refocusing and changing priorities to enable implementation of the task force's development priorities. This approach is not without precedent. For example, the recommendations of the Kootenay Region Transportation Task Force were well received by the Ministry of Transportation and Highways, and implementation is now proceeding. Although tourism development involves more ministries, the same principle applies.

In many cases, municipal governments and communities should be considered as possible sources of funding for physical development. For example, signage, heritage attraction development and infrastructure requirements can reasonably involve some funding participation from communities.

Private Sector

The private sector can fuel the region's economy by investing in sound tourism opportunities. Indeed, experience has shown that a stakeholder-driven tourism strategy has the greatest potential for optimal success.

Throughout the course of the community meetings held in support of this strategy, it was apparent that the extent to which tourism affects the range of private enterprise was not fully understood. For example, the local grocer may not appreciate that 20 per cent of his annual revenues could have been derived from tourists who are there to visit friends and relatives. In the Nechako, 43 per cent of the B.C resident visitors and 32 per cent of the non-B.C. visitors come for this very reason. Such visitors require food and gas, they go shopping and visit local attractions.

Successful tourism development positively affects all members of the community. It is therefore in the interest of everyone, whether or not they are tourism operators, to invest in British Columbia's second-largest growth industry.

Exhibit 9.2

Recommended Time-lines

Priority #1 Strengthen Lines of Communication	Short
Priority #2 Ensure the Tourism Industry Receives Due Consideration in Resource-Use Planning	Medium
Priority #3 Increase the Awareness of the Positive Impacts of Tourism	Short
Priority #4A Address Financing and Incentives for Tourism Ventures	Medium
Priority #4B Address Financial Incentives for Tourism Ventures	Medium
Priority #5 Encourage Improved Access to Tourism Facilities for the Mobility-Impaired	Small
Priority #6 Improve Tourism Services Throughout the Nechako Region	Large
Priority #7 Locate Area Tourism Information Signs in Current and Future Highway Pull-outs and Rest Stops	Small
Priority #8 Identify and Adopt a Common Regional Identity	Small
Priority #9 Increase Tourism Visitor Revenues Through the Development of Regional and Local Activity and Tour Packages	Large
Priority #10 Increase the Quality of Service to Our Visitors	Medium

Priority #11 Identify and Prepare an Overview of Heritage, Cultural and Natural Resources in the Region	Large
Priority #12 Improve Highway Signage	Small
Priority #13 Increase the Number of Outdoor Opportunities and Products	Large
Priority #14 Improve Marketing Services and Regional Promotions	Large

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Let's Talk Tourism!

Nechako Region Community Input:

Results From Community Tourism Planning Meetings

Prepared for:
Nechako Development Region
Tourism Task Force

Prepared by:
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Appendix A

Table of Contents

Methodology	Appendix A- 1
Atlin	Appendix A- 2
Burns Lake	Appendix A-10
Cassiar	Appendix A-15
Dease Lake	Appendix A-19
Fort St. James	Appendix A-24
Fraser Lake / Fort Fraser	Appendix A-28
Granisle	Appendix A-32
Houston	Appendix A-36
Iskut	Appendix A-39
Smithers	Appendix A-42
Telegraph Creek	Appendix A-48
Telkwa	Appendix A-53
Vanderhoof	Appendix A-58

Let's Talk Tourism!

Methodology

OBJECTIVE

The development of the Nechako Tourism Development Strategy was structured to ensure that all stakeholders had access to the input process. As the initial step towards this goal, community meetings encouraging community participation were held throughout the region.

> **The primary reason for holding the community meetings was to identify opportunities and constraints for tourism development within the Nechako Development Region.**

PROCESS

To encourage participation, the Nechako Tourism Development Discussion Paper was prepared and distributed, advertisements were placed in local newspapers, letters were sent out, posters were placed in high-visibility locations, and media interviews were granted. As well, individuals and groups were contacted by their community Tourism Task Force representative.

Each meeting opened with a cursory explanation as to why the Nechako Advisory Board established the preparation of a regional tourism strategy as a top priority. The role of the Tourism Task Force was then outlined, followed by a summary of the meeting's objectives.

The balance of the meeting focused around the discussion paper. First, the paper was briefly highlighted, and key regional tourism products and visitor trends were pointed out. The remainder of the meeting was devoted to discussion. To stimulate participation and discover common regional issues, the questions found in the back of the discussion paper were used as a guide.

RESULTS

In essence, the Nechako Tourism Planning Meetings were brainstorming sessions, designed to generate opportunities and constraints as perceived by the community stakeholders.

There was no attempt to quantify the results by percentage, as the meetings were not intended to act as a survey. Rather, each contribution was listed without discrimination. It is important to recognize that any one of the points contributed could have had the support of only one individual. Equally true, any number of the points could have had the support of all the participants.

COMMUNITY INPUT RESULTS

Most of the opportunities, constraints and action steps gathered in each of the communities were local in nature. However, when the information is reviewed, a number of regional commonalities are revealed.

Atlin - June 14, 1991

Objectives

To diversify and strengthen the local economy through pursuing increased tourism development; without negatively affecting the Atlin way of life.

Opportunities

Increase regional promotions
- Nechako's natural beauty
- Atlin through organizing and offering a (free) guided tour to a travel writer
- a pristine wilderness experience
- regional circle tours

Further development and increased promotion of regional geography, history and culture
- restore and refloat the Tarahne
- restore the Globe Theatre and other historic buildings
- museum archives - newspapers and photos
- open placer mines to the tourist; they are full of aesthetic and historic beauty and artifacts in situ (in their original place)
- Tlingit history
- enlarge Warm Bay B.C. forestry campsite
- need cabins and an interpretive centre for Atlin Park

Create additional festivals and events
- regional snowmobile race from Granisle to Atlin using the B.C. Rail bed (winter tourism can be a great success; e.g., the Iditerod)
- Atlin fishing derby

Themes and logos
- Switzerland of the North
- The Gold Rush of '98
- Historical Atlin

Increase the number of outdoor, sport and adventure activities available

- rafting and kyaking
- hut-to-hut snowmobiling
- auto-touring
- heli-hiking/climbing
- skiing
- hiking
- climbing
- houseboating
- develop eco-tourism package tours

Increase accommodations

- need more accommodations
- increase capacity of existing facilities
- need more RV facilities with full hook-up

Target seasonal residents

- provide seasonal residents with a list of things to do in the area

Increase packaged and non-packaged tours

- guided hiking
- guided glacier and cross-country skiing
- guided snowmobiling
- self-guided historic walking tour of Atlin and area
- nature/wildlife/bird-watching/botany/photo safaris
- houseboat excursions
- revive the land-water circle tour that was used in the '30s: Carcross to Atlin
- nature workshops
- geology tours
- curling bonspiels
- skating events
- packaged dog sledding trips
- guided mining tours
- guided tours of the Tarahne
- flight-seeing tours of the icefields
- hunting and fishing
- sleigh rides complete with hot chocolate and chili dinner

Co-ordinate and promote regional arts and crafts

- schedule early in the season and distribute regionally as well as with Whitehorse, Carcross and Skagway
- regional art shows (travelling shows)
- travel trade shows
- regional artists' association
- local arts and crafts include local painters, a moose antler carver, a gold jewellery designer, stained-glass craftsperson, metal worker, sculptors, furs and native artwork

Design and promote special-interest retreats

- self-improvement retreats
- target book writers and artists
- high-powered executives looking for a 'R-and-R back-to-nature retreat'
- serene, tranquil, contemplative retreats

Target marketing

- Atlin is located 150 miles from a market of 28,000--Juneau, Alaska and a 40-minute flight from 20,000-plus in Whitehorse, Yukon
- target upper-class European travellers

InfoCentre improvements

- InfoCentre counsellors should be made fully aware of what is available in Atlin and the surrounding communities--in the past, students who don't know the local history, geography, or native culture have been hired
- could use addition printed material that the visitor could take with them
- hours of operation are not long enough

Accommodate the mobility-impaired market

- would be interested in pursuing the mobility-impaired market but not sure what infrastructure changes would be required or if the funds are available

Constraints

Road conditions

- the condition of the road into Atlin discourages many touring visitors from exploring it
- road into Atlin needs to be paved or chip sealed
- the Yukon part of the road into Atlin is in even greater need of maintenance
- improve Highway 37 (the dust is hazardous)
- need second road into Atlin (Juneau to Atlin, B.C., connector)

Provincial representation

- provincial representation of this region has been poor
- the Yukon does more to promote this portion of the region than B.C.
- due to Atlin's geographic location, it is very dependent on being included in all Yukon promotions; because every visitor driving into Atlin has been a visitor in the Yukon, as you cannot reach Atlin without travelling through part of the Yukon first

Geographic location

- the touring visitor must travel through the Yukon to get Atlin
- high season is only two to three months long
- the remoteness of Atlin can be a constraint
- the winter climate is too cold and too unpredictable

Lack of community organization or body

- because Atlin is unincorporated and equity-poor, provincial financial assistance programs are difficult to access
- Atlin needs a central committee that speaks for all of Atlin

Native negotiations

- settle land claims

Marketing of the region needs to be increased

- B.C. government provides funding for communities to partner and print an area promotional brochure; Atlin's most logical partners are Skagway, Carcross, and Whitehorse but because of borders, funding is only available for Atlin to partner with Cassiar and Dease Lake (of which Atlin has very little in common); the funds available for the latter should be placed on promotions with the previously mentioned communities
- Atlin and the Yukon would benefit if Atlin were mentioned in all the Yukon publications including The Vacation Guide to Canada's Yukon--it mentions all the sights along the Atlin Road up to mile 27--the Yukon/B.C. border and that's it--it wouldn't cost much to add a line or two acknowledging that Atlin is located at the end of the road
- in a recent Yukon newspaper supplement, the NXNW Tourism Association placed a full page ad--on the front page of the supplement there was a map of the area and Highway 37 was not shown--this is bad for everyone
- better advertising

Lack of co-operation among stakeholders

- community members have to learn to co-operate with one another: share industry knowledge; and co-operatively advertise
- the B.C. Forest Service is thinking of building the equivalent of the Atlin InfoCentre at the Warm Springs; this effort would be better utilized if the location were in Atlin, in conjunction with existing facilities
- Atlin has a strong anti-tourism and anti-development following (not ALL tourism is bad for a community)

Seasonal residents

- seasonal business owners take the profits earned in Atlin and spend them elsewhere (dollar leakage)

Shortage of human resources

- there are many identified projects but not enough local people to implement them
- Atlin volunteers are overloaded and burnt out; Atlin needs a professional fundraiser and proposal-writer to access grants or a foundation similar to Fort Langley's
- low population base

Prince George InfoCentre

- Prince George InfoCentre promotes Highway 97 and discourages visitors from travelling the Stewart-Cassiar

Quality and quantity of facilities

- accommodations, restaurants and services limited, particularly if bus tours were to be targeted
- need a marina and docks
- lack of evening activities
- upgrade the Telegraph Trail

Need for an airstrip or upgrading

- runway needs paving(slated for 1993), lighting (slated for 1992), a remote communication outlet (installed) and a non-directional beacon (installed)

Other infrastructure limitations

- increase capacity of sewer and water system

Need for improved signage program

- Signage 'rules' should become 'policies' in the north--the north is different and therefore should be treated differently; however there should be restriction
- at the present time, Atlin cannot place a sign at the Atlin turn-off because the turn-off is located in the Yukon
- signs are not large enough or interesting enough
- bed-and-breakfasts should be allowed to participate in the blue-and-white sign program and the B.C. Accommodation Guide
- there is not enough information provided to the visitor during their drive in
- need (uniform) signs to identify attractions
- distance to Atlin signs should be placed on the Alaska Highway
- highways should provide a sign that identifies the history of the Atlin area

Tourism education

- a tourism representative should be identified in each community and sent to tourism conferences to learn about existing programs and services (government should provide funding)
- local tourism association needs advice on how to go about pursuing tourism development
- overall level of education needs to be improved
- need for increased hospitality and human resource training; e.g., Superhost
- educate our young people
- residents lack knowledge of local area
- government could develop a series of tourism-related courses (the following '*' topics could form the outline)
- operators need further training in how to:
  * package products
  * target markets
  * develop historic component
  * build a brochure that targets investors
  * identify trends

Poor research data

- data relating specifically to the Atlin area is poor

High costs

- gas prices
- taxes charged to the visitor have a negative impact
- high cost of transportation to the area inhibits tourism growth
- offer PST rebate to Yukon visitors and locals to stop dollar leakage

Limited tax base

- due to the small population, the tax base is far too small to consider any community development

Lack of government funding

- need tourism development funding--the population isn't large enough to pursue tourism development on their own
- Info Centre needs an increase in funding
- need marketing funds--Atlin Tourism Association can't afford to advertise in the Milepost Magazine
- funding is needed to upgrade the infrastructure
- Atlin doesn't have the financial resources to match provincial funding dollar-for-dollar

Deficient access to financing for tourism ventures

- financing requirements difficult to meet or simply not available

Environmental degradation and visitor erosion
- care should be taken not to exploit the resource at the expense of the environment
- any increase in tourism must be controlled in order to maintain chosen lifestyle
- selling packaged group tours would minimize impact on the environment

Protection of remote historic and rare geographic sites difficult to monitor
- rock paintings need better protection

Regional boundaries should be changed
- change boundaries to include all of Highway 37 and Telegraph Creek

Need an improved transportation network
- regular bus service that traverses the full length of Highway 37
- need direct flights to Atlin

Government requirements too sophisticated
- grant applications are difficult to understand and complicated to fill in (they require expertise)

Management of Via Rail
- concerned about any Via Rail Passenger Service being cut
- Via Rail links touring visitors with the ferry system in Prince Rupert

Community residents indifferent
- apathy among community members
- Atlin volunteers are overloaded and burnt out
- lack majority of the community's interest
- locals (including Natives) and owner-operators do not know enough of their local history, and are often ignorant of the local attractions
- community beautification; e.g., the town should be clean, well-maintained and landscaped, including flowers

Action Steps

Planning should be pursued based on partnerships between government, local residents and private industry. Control must remain with the local residents. The provincial government's role should be to provide advice and support; e.g., Atlin needs the government's expertise in developing a **local** tourism strategy and implementation plan.

Atlin should form a local tourism board, one that would maintain local control of tourism development (already in place: Atlin Visitor Association). This board would be a member of a larger regional network.

B.C. and the Yukon need to agree on a working partnership for marketing, development and maintenance.

Special areas should be identified for residents. This is an incomplete list, however there are: sacred Native sites; the Pine Creek and Lakeview subdivision; Lot 55 lakeshore property; the Warm Bay Road should be closed to the general public; and the Native village and the cemetery.

Arts and Crafts

A list of available local arts and crafts will be compiled by Kate Fisher and forwarded to:
Michelle Nataros, Box 2119, Mackenzie, B.C., V0J 2C0.

Burns Lake - May 1, 1991

Objectives

Diversify the local economy by increasing the economic value of tourism.

Opportunities

Further development and increased promotion of regional history and culture

- 200-year anniversary of the Alexander Mackenzie Trail
- Telegraph Trail
- famous pioneers
- heritage homes
- Native history and culture
- Simon Fraser's explorations
- railroad's role in settling this region

Mapping of historic and rare geographic sites

- map out historic sites near each community and build a regional and provincial historic sites map
- include driftwood, opal, agate, and fossil beds

Themes and logos

- natural beauty
- wilderness adventure experience
- build on 'the heart of the lakes district'; e.g., 'Niagara West--the Marrying Town', followed up with a minted coin in the shape of a heart (local)

Create additional festivals and events

- host cross-country skiing competitions
- promote family and school reunions, etc.
- co-ordinate a regional fishing derby to be held over four months, with $100,000 in prize money, with mini-prizes offered at a different lake every weekend
- tag-a-fish contest
- host church conventions
- calendar photo contest
- events should be stretched over a number of weekends

Highway design

- people have to slow down when they get to town because the highway winds its way through town

Increase regional promotions
- intraprovincial circle tours
- increase regional exposure through co-operative advertising
- co-operatively advertise regional festivals and events, (i.e., Music '91) and reach a larger audience
- advertising/printing company could build a 'destination area' place mat for distribution to restaurants, etc.

Increase packaged and non-packaged tours
- backcountry wilderness experiences
- mountain bike tours
- self-guided walking tours
- overnight mountain bike trips
- tour the Forest Awareness Trail
- fossil- and rock-hunting
- wildlife-viewing guided tours
- fishing and hunting
- sightseeing tours around the community

Equipment rental business
- demand for additional canoe rentals

Package winter products and events
- earn your dinner by cross-country skiing to it!
- wildlife viewing
- snowmobiling
- snowshoeing
- ice fishing

Increase number of attractions and/or extend operating hours
- light the cross-country ski and mountain-bike trails
- private enterprise could purchase Skeena Run (presently run by Via Rail)
- create a Skeena 'Bud Car' Run
- dining at the top of a mountain or on a river bank

Design and promote special-interest retreats
- self-improvement retreats
- summer art (drawing, painting, photography) and music workshops

Increase accommodations
- room for bed-and-breakfasts
- existing accommodations full Monday through Friday

Target seasonal residents
- turn 'seasonal residents' into full-time residents

Co-ordinate and promote regional arts and crafts
- sell them under the umbrella name of Northwest Crafts
- create a regional arts council
- develop a regional arts-and-crafts catalogue

Constraints

Tourism education
- overall level of education needs to be improved
- need for increased hospitality and human-resource training; e.g., Superhost
- go into the schools and educate our young people
- deliver entrepreneurial skills presentation to Grade 6 students
- residents lack knowledge of local area
- service plant owners and operators should involve themselves with learning how to serve the public better (enrol the owner or operator in Superhost)

Need for improved signage program
- Ministry of Transportation and Highways' blue-and-white visitor information signs are inconsistent and too vague
- cultural and historic site signs are needed
- lack of pull-out signs (should be plexiglassed and covered)
- increase point-of-interest sign program

Road conditions
- secondary roads need to be upgraded

Provincial representation
- it is time that provincial ministries focused on tourism planning, and development, rather than marketing and promoting
- province should do more to market the region to Europe

Poor research data
- need reliable market information so that target marketing of specific groups can be pursued in a cost-effective manner

Community residents indifferent
- apathy among community members
- lack of community pride
- Chamber of Commerce tried co-ordinating local festivals and events and failed because they didn't get a response
- some felt community beautification would make a difference

Poor co-ordination of regional transportation network
- bus, plane, train, and ferries have done little to co-ordinate their times

Management of Via Rail
- the run could be valuable to the region if it were managed properly
- Via Rail could increase business through packaging with available attractions

Need to strengthen lines of communication at all levels
- approach forest industry representatives and partner in tourism
- the various ministries should co-ordinate their efforts and reduce the amount of overlapping taking place
- co-operation between tourism operators and tourism planners

Region lacks unity
- region has the potential to become a destination area
- region lacks a common tourism goal

Shortage of human resources
- Burns Lake does not have a recreation co-ordinator
- region is large with relatively few residents

High costs
- liability insurance
- gas prices
- infrastructure changes required to accommodate mobility-impaired market are costly

Resource-use conflicts
- clear-cut logging
- diminishing wildlife
- active logging areas should not be promoted
- places to participate in wilderness experiences are disappearing
- need a land-use plan--tourism is a resource-based industry and should receive an equal opportunity at planning and accessing the resource

Native negotiations
- blockades sometimes 'block' businesses from their customers
- land claims discourage new investment

Environmental degradation and visitor erosion
- concerns have been expressed about potential herbicides leaching into Francois Lake

Quality and quantity of facilities
- facilities need to be upgraded in order to meet the demands of the international traveller
- accommodations limited Monday through Friday (facilities are near-full to full with business travellers)
- need additional RV dump stations

Protection of remote historic and rare geographic sites difficult to monitor

Co-ordination of regional festivals and events
- catalogue regional festivals and events

Action Steps

Hire a lobbyist to lobby government for a Be a Tourist in Your Own Province promotional campaign. A campaign that ensures equal coverage of **all** the tourism regions.

Develop a cultural and historic site signs program. Each region could be identifiably unique if the signs were a different colour and size in each region.

Projects should be pursued based on partnerships between government and industry. Government should play a supportive role.

Arts and Crafts

A list of available local arts and crafts will be compiled by Wayne Brown and forwarded to:
Michelle Nataros, Box 2119, Mackenzie, B.C., V0J 2C0.

Cassiar - June 12, 1991

Objectives

Diversify and strengthen the local economy through pursuing potential tourism development.

Opportunities

Increase regional promotions
- 1992 is the 20th anniversary of the construction of the Stewart-Cassiar Highway--the 20th anniversary could be promoted along side the 50th anniversary of the Alaska Highway
- Nechako's natural beauty--the Stewart-Cassiar Highway is more scenic than Highway 97
- the drive being half a day shorter
- intraprovincial circle tours
- need a better brochure of the Stewart-Cassiar Highway--the present brochure confuses the visitor--they think it includes information on the Yukon and Alaska, not the Stewart-Cassiar Highway

Further development and increased promotion of regional history and culture
- Gold Rush history
- old buildings at McDam Creek
- old mill
- Cassiar Mine
- Native history

Create additional festivals and events
- snowmobiling from Stewart to Cassiar
- regional road race
- hold a Longest Day of the Year event

Themes and logos
- prospecting--the Gold Rush

Increase the number of outdoor, sport and adventure activities available
- Cassiar is suitable for wilderness-type packages
- canoeing
- snowmobiling from Stewart to Cassiar
- fishing
- nature observation

Increase services to the visitor
- need an auto repair shop

Increase accommodations
- need a hotel or motel at the junction (Jade City)

Accommodate the mobility-impaired market

- prepared to make any changes that would show a return on investment
- the people up here have time on their hands--if access is a problem, the mobility-impaired will be will be accommodated for, even if the Northerners have to carry them!

Increase packaged and non-packaged tours

- guided tours of gold mines, including some panning
- guided canoe trips down the Dease River
- guided wilderness trail riding trips

Constraints

Road conditions

- the number 1 tourism constraint is the poor condition (dust and pot-holes) of Highway 37

Lack of community organization or body

- there is no community focal point (organization) and therefore no community voice (need a governing body--an incorporated municipality) Cassiar Mines is not against incorporation

Provincial representation

- provincial representation of this region has been poor
- the Yukon does more to promote this portion of the region than B.C.
- Music '91 was supposed to be a province-wide event and yet not one community along the Stewart-Cassiar was even contacted, let alone included in the provincial event scheduling

Lack of co-operation amongst stakeholders

- local operators need to recognise that the whole region would benefit if they all work together and promote all businesses along the Stewart-Cassiar Highway

Don't have an InfoCentre

- need an InfoCentre at the junction (Jade City)
- a non-hosted InfoCentre would be adequate--all Tourism B.C. would have to do is supply brochures and a flag

Limited access to Crown lands

- release additional lands at the junction (Jade City)

Prince George InfoCentre

- Prince George InfoCentre promotes Highway 97 and discourages visitors from travelling the Stewart-Cassiar
- P.G. InfoCentre refuses to rack Highway 37 brochures
- need to educate the P.G. InfoCentre employees regarding the Stewart-Cassiar Highway and what it has to offer

Cassiar is a company-owned town
- tourism is inhibited because the company has control over whether or not a business is allowed to open in Cassiar

Native negotiations
- land claims discourage new investment

Quality and quantity of facilities
- zero accommodations available to the touring visitor
- need additional RV dump stations

Need for improved signage program
- Signage 'rules' should become 'policies' in the north--the north is different and therefore should be treated differently
- should allow northern souvenir/gift shops to be included in the blue-and-white sign program
- NO OVERNIGHTING signs should be placed at all highway rest areas and pull-outs where overnight camping facilities are available
- '2 km' advance warning signs should be installed
- the current rule requiring signs to be 100 feet off the centre line is unrealistic
- the Yukon has a good sign system

Open-pit-mine tours not available
- maintenance of the road strictly for tours is cost-prohibitive
- the mine is no longer actively using the open pit mine--they've gone to underground mining (it would be too crowded to conduct underground tours)

Need to strengthen lines of communication at all levels
- the various ministries should co-ordinate their efforts and reduce the amount of overlapping taking place
- lines of communication between the Ministry of Economic Development, Small Business and Trade and all communities along Highway 37 need to be strengthened--northern communities feel they don't hear about available opportunities

High costs
- gas prices
- GST
- hydro is extremely costly--14.8 cents per kilowatt per hour--Jack Kempf wrote a letter: "Cassiar is the only place in B.C. that doesn't have power..."--supposedly, a subsidy was authorized last year?
- food

Regional boundaries should be changed
- Nechako Development Region should include Iskut, Telegraph Creek and all of Highway 37

Lack of government funding
- need tourism development funding

Deficient access to financing for tourism ventures
- financing requirements difficult to meet or simply not available due to geographic location

Tourism education
- overall level of education needs to be improved
- the resident and visitor need to be educated on the value of tourism to the region
- need for increased hospitality and human-resource training; e.g., Superhost
- Southerners lack an understanding of the North

Management of Via Rail
- concerned about the Via Rail Skeena run being cut
- also concerned about the cost of running the run

Poor research data
- what does the tourist want?

Action Steps

Projects should be pursued based on partnerships between government and private industry. Governments role should be to provide support only.

The NXNW Travel Showcase should be sold and not given away. People do not place any value on something that is given to them. Visitors pay good money for a copy of the Mile Post and feel they are getting their money's worth. You will never find a Mile Post in the trash!

The region needs a central registry to co-ordinate festivals and events.

Questions

Why don't lottery dollars earned in this area return to this area?

Why are the Yukon and Alaska Highways getting promotional funds for Rendezvous '92 and not the Stewart-Cassiar Highway?

Arts and Crafts

A list of available local arts and crafts will be compiled by Ida Walters and forwarded to:
Michelle Nataros, Box 2119, Mackenzie, B.C., V0J 2C0.

Dease Lake - June 11, 1991

Objectives

To increase the economic value of Dease Lake's number 2 industry--tourism.

Opportunities

Increase regional promotions

- 1992 is the 20th anniversary of the construction of the Stewart-Cassiar Highway--the 20th anniversary could be promoted along side the 50th anniversary of the Alaska Highway
- Nechako's natural beauty--the Stewart-Cassiar Highway is more scenic than Highway 97
- the drive being half a day shorter
- intraprovincial circle tours
- need a better brochure of the Stewart-Cassiar Highway--the present brochure confuses the visitor--they think it includes information on the Yukon and Alaska, not the Stewart-Cassiar Highway

Traffic increase

- one man's auto count over 1976-77-78 averaged two cars per six hours; in 1981, he counted 240 cars per six hours (this year Ministry of Transportation and Highways is placing traffic counters on Highway 37 and the Telegraph Creek Road

Create a park on Dease Lake

- a park on Dease Lake would most likely result in spin-off business; i.e., boat rentals

Become the northern centre

- Dease Lake is ideally located to become the northern centre

Co-ordinate and promote regional arts and crafts

- gold nugget and jade jewellery
- native crafts

Increase number of attractions and/or extend operating hours

- business hours are not accommodating--some businesses close on weekends
- in some cases, non-development is the attraction

Further development and increased promotion of regional geography, history and culture

- Telegraph Trail
- during the 1880s, Laketon had a population of 10,000
- Porter's Landing
- steam-driven rock-driller

Create additional festivals and events
- regional snowmobile race using the rail grade
- fish derby

Themes and logos
- rich native history
- Hudson Bay fur trade
- prospecting--the Gold Rush

Adopt the LID (local improvement district) program
- receive grants in lieu of taxes through the LID program

Equipment rental business
- boat rentals on Dease Lake

Increase the number of outdoor, sport and adventure activities available
- cross-country skiing
- 'flight-seeing' tours
- hiking trails
- snowmobiling
- river-rafting or canoeing operation on the Stikine and/or Spatzizi (Tahltan Band Council started a river-rafting operation on the Stikine but later closed it due to high insurance costs)

Increase services to the visitor
- banking services for the tourist would benefit the community
- opportunity to develop a campground that would be utilized by the visitor as well as the resident

Accommodate the mobility impaired-market
- Parks is taking an active role in accommodating for the mobility-impaired market

Increase packaged and non-packaged tours
- demand for self-guided walking trails
- guided winter tour of Spatzizi Park via dog sled

Package winter products and events
- create special events; e.g., B.C.'s longest hut-to-hut snowmobile race
- design a "winter experience"
- guided winter tour of Spatzizi Park via dog sled
- curling bonspiels
- super-dry powder until March
- ice fishing

Publicize highway improvements

- Ministry of Transportation and Highways is hard-topping 100 kilometres of the Stewart-Cassiar Highway this year (87 kilometres of seal-coat and 13 kilometres of pavement)--this information should be shared with all InfoCentres in the north--this would create good PR for the Ministry of Transportation and Highways and the tourism industry

Constraints

Road conditions

- the number 1 tourism constraint is the poor condition (dust and pot-holes) of Highway 37
- Ministry of Transportation and Highways' development budget should be increased (present budget is used to keep the road safe)

Lack of community organization or body

- Dease Lake is not incorporated
- there is no community focal point (organization) and therefore no community voice
- Dease Lake is only 20 years old and its community members are still struggling with the challenge of working together

Transient residents

- Dease Lake is a government town--and government employees get transferred every two to five years, making it difficult to work on community long-term goals

Seasonal residents

- Dease Lake has a large number of seasonal residents; i.e., miners, guides and outfitters, students, business...

Prince George InfoCentre

- Prince George InfoCentre promotes Highway 97 and discourages visitors from travelling the Stewart-Cassiar

Shortage of human resources

- growth in the Dease Lake area has been discouraged due to banking restrictions on mortgages; e.g., person would have to have a big savings account to move to Dease Lake because it is very difficult to get a mortgage if you are located more than 50 miles from the financial institution
- there are many projects that can be identified but not enough local people to implement them
- lack of housing keeps the population down

Limited access to parks

- access to Mt. Edziza and Spatsizi Plateau Wilderness Park too restricted

Limited access to Crown lands

- can't develop a camp site on Dease Lake because the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks controls all the land around the lake
- the freeze on licensing backcountry operations is deterring potential investment
- guided tours will not grow until Crown lands policies are in place

Don't have an InfoCentre

- need an official InfoCentre--Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks gets up to 40 persons a day asking for visitor information
- there should be a different InfoCentre program for the north--businesses want to provide tourists with maps and tourist information pertinent to the north--these businesses are small and do not have the rack space required to become official InfoCentres--an InfoCentre flag and northern information are all they require

High costs

- hydro is extremely costly
- high cost of transportation to the area inhibits tourism growth
- 10 per cent of the population pays 100 per cent of the land taxes (government makes up the 90 per cent that doesn't pay land taxes)

Limited tax base

- tax base is far too small to consider any community development

Quality and quantity of facilities

- need a campground
- lack banking services for the tourist
- need a Government Agent

Need for improved signage program

- business owners should be required to take down their signs when they are closed

Resource-use conflicts

- clear-cut logging should be done out of the scenic view
- contour logging practices should be adopted where logging in the scenic view is necessary
- the spraying of chemicals is a concern
- need a resource-management database

Lack of banking services

- Dease Lake doesn't have a bank--bank policy is to finance ventures or mortgages within a 50-kilometre radius; if located outside that radius, only personal loans are authorized

Community residents indifferent
- apathy among community members
- lack of community pride--simple things like cutting the grass and planting some flowers would make a difference

Need an improved transportation network
- regular bus service that traverses the full length of Highway 37 and is co-ordinated so that schedules connect with other forms of transportation

Need to strengthen lines of communication at all levels
- poor understanding of the services provided by North by Northwest Tourism Association
- lines of communication between the ministries of Tourism and Economic Development, Small Business and Trade and all communities along Highway 37 need to be strengthened--northern communities feel uninformed and overlooked

Government requirements too sophisticated
- provincial government should finance studies required for land-based business opportunities; i.e., percolation, environmental and archeological studies--these studies are much too expensive for private enterprise to absorb

Lack of government funding
- need tourism development funding--the population isn't large enough to pursue tourism development on their own

Deficient access to financing for tourism ventures
- financing requirements difficult to meet or simply not available due to geographic location

Regional boundaries should be changed
- Nechako Development Region should include Iskut and Telegraph Creek

Action Steps

Projects should be pursued based on partnerships between government and private industry. Government's role should be a supportive one.

All those affected by the resulting plan (or projects) should be consulted before anything is implemented.

Arts and Crafts

A list of available local arts and crafts will be compiled by Tracey Hubner and forwarded to:
Michelle Nataros, Box 2119, Mackenzie, B.C., V0J 2C0.

Fort St. James - May 9, 1991

Objectives

Diversify the local economy by increasing the economic value of tourism.

To increase number of tourism businesses in the Fort St. James area.

Opportunities

Increase services to the visitor
- potential for highway RV park development
- need additional 100 campsites
- run a bud car year-round from Vancouver

Create additional festivals and events
- Fort St. James to Atlin Road Rally: participants would have to solve clues and/or hunt down souvenirs before they could advance to the next checkpoint; each community could produce a trinket to be searched out as part of the hunt; hold a rally event in each community along the way; due to limited infrastructure, entry should be limited to 50 participants;
- Regional Tree Planters Festival--contests for most unusual vehicle, etc.
- sports-related events

Further development and increased promotion of regional geography, history and culture
- Aviation history--bush pilots opened the northwestern skies using Fort St. James as their base
- potential for living history festivals (potlach celebrations, etc.)
- find a way to unite all the pieces of our history: to present only one piece would not be accurate
- paddle-wheelers
- industry--railroad, logging, mining
- promote the region as a 'cultural corridor'

Increase packaged and non-packaged tours
- Nation Lakes tour
- charter company to organize tour to anywhere the visitor wants to go
- walking tours of the Historic Park, graveyard, Cottonwood Park, and the old church
- lake boat tours
- self-guided driving tour to Germansen Landing and Manson Creek

Co-ordinate and promote regional arts and crafts
- create a northern arts co-op
- include native art, painters, photographers, carvers, etc.

Increase accommodations
- need a hotel
- three new bed-and-breakfast coming on stream this year

Increase number of attractions and/or extend operating hours
- provide more leisure activities

Increase the number of outdoor, sport and adventure activities
- offer more soft adventure activities (horseback riding)
- regional Outward Bound summer and winter camps in Atlin, Fort St. James, and Granisle
- canoe trip of the Driftwood River, and Takla, Trombler and Stewart Lakes

Package winter products and events
- run a B.C. Rail bud car for downhill ski packages between Prince George, Vanderhoof and Fort St. James
- host sporting events: winter triathlons; dog-sled races; snowmobile races

Target seasonal residents
- provide attractions and services for the seasonal resident

Accommodate the mobility-impaired market
- 20 to 30 per cent of North American population is in some way mobility-impaired; this would be a large market to overlook

InfoCentre improvements
- promote InfoCentre travel-planning services to local residents

Increase regional promotions
- publish a quarterly regional festivals and events calender
- produce a 'cultural guide book,' identifying regional heritage tourism opportunities

Themes and logos
- need three themes; i.e., one each for Americans, Canadians, and Europeans
- a wilderness theme
- Centre for Northern Remote Commercial Aviation
- A Proud Native Heritage
- Fur Trade and the Capital of New Caledonia

Target marketing
- host canoe competitions/events and target canoe clubs

Constraints

Quality and quantity of facilities
- area has approximately 100 camp spots and needs 200
- lack night-life opportunities
- existing facilities and services need to be upgraded
- accommodations do not meet todays standards of quality

Deficient of financing for tourism ventures
- financing requirements difficult to meet

Tourism education
- need for increased hospitality and human resource training
- need for a tourism education program

The ten-dollar tourist
- the ten-dollar tourist is self contained, leaving little behind; i.e., they use our resources and in return they buy a hamburger, fries and a coke

Shortage of human resources
- lack of qualified tourism training instructors

Marketing of the region needs to be increased
- NXNW Tourism Association provides poor representation of the eastern and smaller communities in the tourism region
- lack of advertising dollars

Need to strengthen lines of communication at all levels
- Fort St. James does not fully understand NXNW's role
- the various ministries should co-ordinate their efforts and reduce the amount of overlapping taking place

Provincial representation
- provincial representation of this region has been poor

Road conditions
- Highway 27 needs upgrading
- Ministry of Forests should be required to map out and notify tourism planners, InfoCentres... as to which roads and trails have been taken out of service, as well as any that have been added to the network

Poor research data
- additional research data is needed

Lack of government funding
- InfoCentres need an increase in funding
- 'tourism tax' is used to market while services and amenities suffer

Need for improved signage program

- need improved directional signs program particularly on North Road: visitors and residents alike get lost because of the increased number of logging roads
- pull-out sign at Vanderhoof weigh scales is poorly placed; i.e., the sign should be moved to a more-visible location
- signs indicating information pull-out ahead are needed; i.e., signs are too close to the pull-out for the driver to make the decision to stop from a speed of 90 kilometres per hour

Management of Via Rail

- level of service is extremely poor and must be upgraded

Resource-use conflicts

- clear-cut logging a visual problem

Action Steps

Projects should be pursued based on partnerships between government and industry, as well as community clubs, organizations and associations. Government should play a supportive role (expertise is needed). There should be some government funding made available to act as the catalyst to boost the implementation of the projects. Residents do not want the government running the program.

Need a regional festivals co-ordinator, particularly, and a community festival coordinator (that report to the regional festivals co-ordinator). Festivals and events calender should be produced quarterly and published no more than one week prior to the period. It was recognized that NXNW already provides this function, however, due to the lead time required, a large portion of the events get left out. Fort St. James did not feel that overlapping events was a problem. There are only 15 weekends to work with. It would be unrealistic to think that overlapping could be completely eliminated. However, if an accurate, up-to-date calendar were available, the visitor could plan for the ones they'd like to attend.

Arts and Crafts

A list of available local arts and crafts will be compiled by Kris Neilsen and forwarded to:
Michelle Nataros, Box 2119, Mackenzie, B.C., V0J 2C0.

Fraser Lake / Fort Fraser - May 6, 1991

Objectives

Diversify the local economy by increasing the economic value of tourism.

Opportunities

Increase services to the visitor
- need boat launches and moorage (Fraser Lake)
- potential for highway and lakeside RV park development that accommodates rigs up to 40 feet long
- restaurant with a historic theme
- open parks earlier

Increase regional promotions
- increase regional exposure through co-operative advertising; i.e., every community brochure in this region should advertise Highway 37 as **the** route to Alaska

Co-ordinate and promote regional arts and crafts
- sell through local business
- InfoCentres could display crafts and promote the shop that carries them

Package winter products and events
- offer short relaxation retreats

Mapping of historic and rare geographic sites
- map out historic sites near each community and build a regional historic sites map

Increase number of attractions and/or extend operating times
- hold live carving shows
- 'bud car' scenic tours

Target seasonal residents
- turn seasonal residents into full-time residents
- advertise targeting the seasonal resident

Increase packaged and non-packaged tours
- Fraser Lake Saw Mills offers a guided tour; last year they printed 1,500 brochures and will be reprinting this year
- canoe, raft, boat guided tours
- guide-outfitters develop a tour of their territory
- lakeshore walking tour

InfoCentre improvements
- services provided at InfoCentres could be largely improved if greater emphasis was placed on the hiring and training of summer staff
- open May 1 and stay open until at least September 30th--this region gets very busy with hunters and fishermen
- InfoCentre network needs to be strengthened

Themes and logos
- 'recreation at its best' (local)
- 'home of Mouse Mountain' (local)
- develop a theme that ties the region's history together
- 'land of mystery' (regional)
- 'outdoor centre of British Columbia'

Equipment rental business
- need boat rentals on Fraser Lake

Create additional festivals and events
- fishing derby with prizes for largest fish only; no hidden-weight or combined-weight prizes

Further development and increased promotion of regional geography, history and culture
- Native culture, Alexander Mackenzie Trail
- railroad's role in settling this region
- Nechako Valley first agricultural settlement in B.C.
- industrial history

Package existing attractions, accommodations and services
- local operators could offer a more complete product if they worked together and packaged existing attractions, accommodations and services

Target marketing
- local resorts and attractions could design a family package targeting the Lower Mainland
- target teenagers through offering: trail-riding, climbing, hiking, summer camps, etc.

Constraints

Shortage of human resources
- need community tourism representative

Regional boundaries should be changed
- change boundaries to include all of Highway 37

Geographic location
- the region's climate can be a constraint

Tourism education
- overall level of education needs to be improved
- need for increased hospitality and human resource training; the tourist expects a higher level of hospitality
- operators don't know how to:
  - package products
  - co-ordinate co-operative advertising

Marketing of the region needs to be increased
- to reach a larger audience, the region should use TV advertising
- visitors perception of B.C. needs to be changed; e.g., Alaska is viewed as 'Super Natural', while B.C. is viewed simply as the route to Alaska

Need for an airstrip or upgrading
- need an airport with better facilities

Resource-use conflicts
- more tourist corridors are needed
- resource extraction is a major concern
- active logging areas should not be promoted

Need for improved signage program
- signs indicating pull-outs are too close to the pull-out for the driver to make the decision to stop from a speed of 90 kilometres per hour
- Ministry of Transportation and Highways' blue-and-white visitor information signs are inconsistent
- lack of maps and information signs at pull-outs
- increase point-of-interest sign program
- need improved directional signs program; i.e., visitors reaching Prince George, have a difficult time determining which way to turn for Highway 37
- increase number of distance signs; i.e., next services 90 kilometres

Poor research data
- InfoCentres could operate more effectively if they had a complete inventory of available attractions

Lack of co-operation among stakeholders
- integrated resource-planning is a great concept, but lacks the power required to make the difference
- lack of co-operation

Management of Via Rail
- present schedule of operation does not promote tourism in this area

Road conditions
- need more passing lanes
- safer shoulders for cyclists
- general design of B.C. highways poor

Lack of highway pull-outs
- need more scenic and historic pull-outs

High costs
- gas prices
- GST
- infrastructure changes required to accommodate mobility-impaired market are costly

Environmental degradation and visitor erosion
- fishing derbies can encourage mishandling of the resource

Licensing requirements
- special fishing tags are negatively impacting number of visitors fishing

Action Steps

At the local level, there should be a community tourism representative (member of the Chamber of Commerce). Their main functions would be to share tourism information and co-ordinate efforts (co-ordinate festivals and attractions dates) with other regional communities.

Fort Fraser and Fraser Lake are very interested in forming a partnership with government and industry. They especially want to participate in the decision-making process.

Arts and Crafts

A list of available local arts and crafts will be compiled by Gill Kopy and forwarded to:
Michelle Nataros, Box 2119, Mackenzie, B.C., V0J 2C0.

Granisle - April 30, 1991

Objectives

Diversify the local economy by increasing the economic value of tourism.

Opportunities

Co-ordinate and promote regional arts and crafts
- Create a regional arts-and-crafts co-operative
- establish outlets in each of the communities; e.g., the Granisle Village Inn is willing to display arts and crafts in their lobby

Increase number of attractions and/or extend operating hours
- create an attraction around the mammoth bones found at the mine site
- canoe-building demonstrations

Further development and increased promotion of regional geography, history and culture
- mammoth bones found at the mine site
- local fossil beds
- potential to build on Native heritage; e.g., canoe-building demonstrations and tours of the historic native villages

Create additional festivals and events
- sports-related events
- co-ordinate an orienteering meet
- bird-watching festivals
- summer camps targeting specific groups; e.g., the handicapped

Design and promote special-interest retreats
- package a two-week total immersion cultural exchange program targeting the Japanese

Themes and logos
- rich native history
- Hudson Bay fur trade
- prospecting--the Gold Rush and silver mining
- largest natural lake in B.C. (local)

Increase the number of outdoor, sport and adventure activities available
- cross-country skiing
- 'flight-seeing' tours
- hiking trails
- snowmobiling

Increase services to the visitor
- Granisle should capitalize on the fact that it is the only community on Babine Lake that has services available to the visitor
- room to expand on those services
- lakeside has great potential for RV park development

Equipment rental businesses
- boat rentals
- catamaran rentals

Increase packaged and non-packaged tours
- extend Fisheries guided tour (for school groups) of the Fulton River Fish Hatchery to the general public
- establish lake and fossil beds guided tours
- guided tours of the island mine
- partner with Native people and package a tour of the three Carrier Native villages
- guided tours to the Babine (fish-counting) Fence
- historic tour of the original Topley Landing Village

InfoCentre improvements
- an InfoCentre at Topley would increase visits to Granisle
- play local/regional videos as promotions tool; e.g., Granisle could run the Flight of the Raven video daily

Accommodate the mobility-impaired market
- Granisle is planning to extend the picnic table ends to accommodate wheelchairs
- new marina will have a wheelchair ramp

Package winter products and events
- potential to package any combination of the following: cross-country skiing; ski orienteering; wildlife viewing; and ice fishing with meals and accommodation
- murder mystery weekends
- create special events; e.g., 'B.C.'s longest hut-to-hut snowmobile race'

Constraints

Need for improved signage program
- need improved directional signs program; i.e., directional signs are needed on the Smithers Landing Road in both directions
- lack of, or poorly placed pull-out signs; i.e., sign at the Topley pull-out is facing the wrong way

Quality and quantity of facilities
- accommodations and services limited
- need a first-class marina

Resource-use conflicts
- clear-cut logging should be done out of the scenic view
- where logging in the scenic view is necessary, contour logging practices should be adopted
- the spraying of chemicals is a concern

Road conditions
- improve the Smithers - Granisle - Fort St. James backroad connector
- better access to highway turn-off at road to Granisle
- secondary and resource road are poorly maintained
- there are too many road construction delays
- response to much-needed road maintenance is slow

Poor research data
- without reliable data, target marketing is difficult

Lack of highway pull-outs
- Granisle needs an information pull-out at the Highway 16 turn-off to Granisle

Deficient access to financing for tourism ventures
- financing requirements difficult to meet

Need for an airstrip or upgrading
- Granisle does not have an airstrip and feels it needs one

Need to strengthen lines of communication at all levels
- poor understanding of the services provided by North by Northwest Tourism Association
- present advertising level is too low
- lines of communication between operators, InfoCentres, NXNW Tourism Association and the ministries of Tourism and Economic Development, Small Business and Trade need to be strengthened; e.g., Granisle was not listed in the 1991 Accommodation Guide and they're not sure why that happened
- local InfoCentre needs to increase communications with Topley Landing

Community residents indifferent
- apathy among community members
- lack of community pride

Tourism education
- need for increased hospitality and human-resource training

Co-ordination of regional festivals and events
- festivals and events co-ordinators (possibly through their local InfoCentre) should develop a closer working relationship with NXNW Tourism Association

Action Steps

At the regional level, the advisory board should strike a planning and implementation committee. North by Northwest Tourism Association should be made an active member of this committee.

At the local level, there should be a community representative whose main functions would be to network with other regional communities and the proposed planning and implementation committee.

Road construction should be carried out at night.

Projects should be pursued based on partnerships between government and industry. Locally, the Lions Club is partnering with government in the development of the golf course.

Arts and Crafts

A list of available local arts and crafts will be compiled by Gail Radley and forwarded to:
Michelle Nataros, Box 2119, Mackenzie, B.C., V0J 2C0.

Houston - May 24, 1991

Objectives

To maintain Houston's present quality of life.

Opportunities

Create additional festivals and events
- hold a tourism trade show (community or regional)

InfoCentre improvements
- InfoCentre/Chamber of Commerce could display souvenirs supplied by local retail shops, in an attempt to encourage visitors to make the trip across the street

Increase regional promotions
- Houston being halfway between Prince Rupert and Prince George
- Four Seasons Park (chariot races, rodeo grounds, loggers' sports, museum...) to neighbouring communities
- industrial (forestry and mining) tours
- salmon hatchery
- circle tours
- the Lions Club sponsored arts-and-crafts trade show
- Houston as a convention centre for the region
- produce a placemat that provides a map of the community and local attractions information--placemats could be traded among other communities within the region as a way of informing potential visitors as to what they can expect to see or do down the road--west side of the table promotes next town to the west, east side of the table promotes the town to the east...

Themes and logos
- "Where the welcome is warm and the wilderness beckons"

Constraints

Community residents indifferent
- tourism is not an issue in Houston (local businesses in the hospitality industry shut down for long weekends)
- lack of interest is due to lack of knowledge
- Houston volunteers are overloaded and burnt out

Community meeting process

- Houston requires a more creative approach; i.e.,
  - conduct one-on-one meetings with individuals
  - ask the Chamber of Commerce to mail a personalized letter to each member notifying them of the meeting (Nechako Development Region should pay for the postage)
  - give participants something for their time; i.e., dinner; the discussion paper didn't tell the community participant anything new
- residents are fed up with meetings and task forces; they want to see results

Tourism education

- overall level of education needs to be improved
- difficult to attract new blood to the tourism industry because tourism jobs are **perceived** as being low-paying and uninteresting
- educate retail sector as to the benefits tourism would bring to their businesses as well as the community (how tourism can help a community maintain a quality of life)
- first, the community does not understand the value of tourism; second, it doesn't see the need for tourism; and finally, as a result, is not actively pursuing tourism as a way to diversifying the economy

Residents are comfortable

- starting wage at the mine is $17.50, and unemployment has been low

Lack entrepreneurial spirit

- residents are not willing to invest in their own community

Over-zealous tourists

- don't want to baby-sit tourists that participate in activities that are beyond their capabilities; resulting search-and-rescue operations are expensive and dangerous

Road conditions

- the design of the highway does not encourage rubbertire traffic to stop in Houston
- difficult to make a left-hand turn into the shopping centre

Marketing of the region needs to be increased

- at the time of the meeting, there was an airline price war happening; if promoted, it had the potential to draw visitors from the lower mainland (for a weekend)
- thrust of promotions should target the regional residents, it would be cheaper to advertise regionally, and maybe more profitable

Lack of co-operation amongst stakeholders

- Houston is an integral part of the region and needs to be part of the regional planning process
- lack of co-operation among regional communities

Need for improved signage program

- need point-of-interest direction signs--these signs would help to pull traffic off the highway
- haven't been included in the blue-and-white sign program
- area promotion signs at a pull-out area (the Downtown Revitalization program through Municipal Affairs will cost share 50-cent dollars)

Arts and Crafts

A list of available local arts and crafts will be compiled by the Arts Council and forwarded to:
Michelle Nataros, Box 2119, Mackenzie, B.C., V0J 2C0.

Iskut - June 20, 1991

Objectives

Diversify and strengthen the local economy through pursuing increased tourism development.

Opportunities

Increase regional promotions
- Nechako's natural beauty

Further development and increased promotion of regional geography, history and culture
- Native history and culture

Increase the number of outdoor, sport and adventure activities available
- hut-to-hut cross-country skiing
- freshwater fishing
- nature photo safaris
- trail riding in Mt. Edziza and Spatsizi Wilderness Parks
- cut more walking trails

Increase accommodations
- Iskut Band Council is building a 30-bay RV campground

Increase packaged and non-packaged tours
- guided hiking
- guided trail riding tours
- guided river-rafting trips

Package winter products and events
- guided cross-country skiing hut-to-hut touring

Co-ordinate and promote regional arts and crafts
- provide exposure for local artisans

Constraints

Road conditions
- improve Highway 37 (the dust is dangerous)

Lack of co-operation among stakeholders
- community members have to learn to co-operate with one another
- businesses have to stop fighting among each other
- locals mistreat tourists

Need proper telephone service
- some facilities are still communicating via radiophone--a business can't hook up a fax machine or answering machine to a radio phone--these functions are essential to running a business in the North)

Limited access to parks
- access to Mt. Edziza and Spatsizi Plateau Wilderness Park too restricted
- existing trails for horseback riding have been cut off (horses would actually help to clear and maintain trails)
- the closing of the rivers a constraint
- need to build more trails
- Mount Edziza and Spatsizi should be hosted

Prince George InfoCentre
- Prince George InfoCentre promotes Highway 97 and discourages visitors from travelling the Stewart-Cassiar
- P.G. InfoCentre telling visitors that Highway 37 is "dangerous to drive and hazardous to your health"

Fort St. John InfoCentre
- Fort St. John InfoCentre promotes Highway 97 and discourages visitors from travelling the Stewart-Cassiar Highway

Native negotiations
- land claims need to be settled

Quality and quantity of facilities
- Highway 37 lacks the attractions and facilities to hold the touring visitor for a longer period of time

Need for improved signage program
- Signage 'rules' should become 'policies' in the north--the north is different and therefore should be treated differently, however there should be restrictions
- '2 km' advance warning signs should be installed along Highway 37
- attractive signs help to break the monotony of the long drive
- gift and souvenir shops should be allowed to participate in the blue-and-white sign program

High costs
- GST--should not be based on a refund system; instead foreign visitors should be exempt at point of purchase
- adventure tourism insurance fees are cost-prohibitive

Lack of government funding
- need tourism development funding (over and above any funding that is awarded for tourism marketing)

Tourism education

- overall level of education needs to be improved
- government could develop a series of tourism-related courses (the following topics could form the outline)
- operators need further training in:
  - package products
  - co-ordinate co-operative advertising
  - advanced guide and outfitting
- need for increased hospitality and human-resource training (SuperHost); the tourist expects a higher level of hospitality

Deficient access to financing for tourism ventures

- financing requirements difficult to meet or simply not available due to geographic location (banking policies)
- the rules dictating the Western Diversification Program need to be relaxed (when considering the North), and the time it takes to receive financing is too long

Regional boundaries should be changed

- Nechako Development Region should include Iskut and Telegraph Creek
- Iskut and Telegraph Creek continue to get overlooked in the planning process
- regional district boundaries should remain as is

Community residents indifferent

- apathy among community members
- lack majority of the community's interest

Action Steps

Planning should be pursued based on partnerships between government (Regional District), the Band Council, local residents and private industry. Governments role should be to provide support only.

Arts and Crafts

A list of available local arts and crafts will be compiled by Lorraine Charette and forwarded to:
Michelle Nataros, Box 2119, Mackenzie, B.C., V0J 2C0.

Smithers - May 22, 1991

Objectives

To diversify and strengthen the local economy through pursuing increased tourism development and spin-off opportunities, without negatively affecting the Smithers way of life.

Opportunities

Further development and increased promotion of regional geography, history and culture

- the Alexander Mackenzie Trail (the grease trail)
- the Telegraph Trail
- the gold rush (visitors could be taught how to pan for gold)
- mining (old prospecting trails)
- railroad
- Hudson Bay Company trading routes (the Beaumont Park kiosk identifies the route)
- Native trading routes
- Native smoke houses
- cultural adventures that include bed-and-breakfasts, farm and ranch holidays, Native culture ('Ksan Indian village), visit a longhouse, paddle down a river in an authentic dug-out canoe, a wilderness experience...all this could be very exciting to a foreigner
- potential for living history festivals (potlach celebrations, etc.)
- the Central Park Building and CN Station

InfoCentre improvements

- InfoCentre member brochures should be displayed (or kept on file) in **all** InfoCentres throughout the NXNW Tourism Region, at no extra charge to the member
- InfoCentres should be more consistent
- increase brochure rack space
- install a computer in each InfoCentre to display brochures (this would eliminate the rack space problem)
- InfoCentre staff is poorly trained--lack first hand knowledge of local attractions and facilities and don't know where to find information
- require additional maps for the touring market

Co-ordinate and promote regional arts and crafts

- create a regional arts and crafts co-op
- display arts and crafts in airports and hotels/motels

Increase number of attractions and/or extend operating hours

- create a controlled mini-Whistler
- increase evening hours to accommodate the motor coaches that overnight in Smithers (this would only work if all the businesses along Main Street opened)

Increase packaged and non-packaged tours
- river-rafting packaged tours
- design a package that targets the business incentive travel market
- backcountry excursions
- mountaineering
- participation (working) vacations

Package winter products and events
- cross-country skiing
- snowmobiling tours
- dog sledding

Create additional festivals and events
- expand the Bulkley Valley Music Festival

Increase regional promotions
- promote the region to residents of the region
- Smithers as a year-round destination for outdoor activities
- Smithers as the halfway (between Prince George and Prince Rupert) service centre for accommodation, evening activities, campgrounds
- InfoCentres to locals (to help with their travel planning needs)
- mini circle tours
- Highway 37 as the shortest route to Alaska
- fisheries to publicize the fish-counting fence
- Smithers as a convention host
- further promote the Bulkley Valley Music Festival

Themes and logos
- 'town for all seasons'
- Smithers has an established Alpine-theme

Target seasonal residents
- tree-planters are a largely overlooked market: lines of communication between their-mini towns and Smithers should be opened; signs should be erected to welcome them upon their arrival
- residents should develop a more positive view of tree-planters
- identify seasonal residents (mushroom-pickers, tree-planters...) and provide them with a welcome package
- community forest should be accessible to all
- all new development should make allowances for the mobility-impaired; e.g., the wheelchair accessible wildlife viewing platform at Eskers Park

Accommodate the mobility-impaired market

- Access to All report identifies operators willing to accommodate the mobility-impaired market
- if the road into Sunny Point were improved (eliminating the three-kilometre hike), young families and seniors could access the area

Constraints

Quality and quantity of facilities

- some participants felt there was a need for additional accommodations
- quality and diversity of restaurants needs to be improved
- accommodations need upgrading
- require additional camping facilities

Tourism education

- overall level of education needs to be improved
- the resident and visitor need to be educated on the value of tourism to their community and region
- the economic value of tourism is misunderstood
- educate financial institutions regarding the tourism industry
- tourism services and hospitality should be taught at local colleges
- educate the forestry industry as to the needs of the tourism industry (in the past forestry has not taken tourism into account)
- government could develop a series of tourism-related courses (the following topics are of interest)
- operators don't know how to:
  - package products
  - promote festivals and events

Native negotiations

- land claims need to be settled
- our negotiating and planning processes are not recognized by the Natives
- potential investors are hesitant due to unsettled land claims

Government requirements too sophisticated

- in order to access government support, a business is made to jump through many hoops

Road conditions
- improve Highway 16
- pave Highway 37
- improve the Smithers - Granisle - Babine - Topleyback road connector
- Ministry of Forests should be required to map out and notify tourism planners, InfoCentres... as to which roads and trails have been taken out of service, as well as any that have been added to the network

Community residents indifferent
- apathy among community members
- grants are available for participation in the Smithers Alpine-theme
- boundaries requiring Alpine-theme development should be expanded beyond Main Street

Poor research data
- there is a need for an industry assessment

Co-ordination of regional festivals and events
- NXNW Tourism Association provides the service (scheduling for summer events needs to be into the NXNW office by January)
- NXNW will update the list on a monthly basis

High costs
- gas prices
- high cost of transportation to the area inhibits tourism growth
- advertising extremely costly in relationship to the financial rewards generated

Lack of co-operation among stakeholders
- the tourism industry is extremely reliant on the co-operation and communication between the transportation, accommodation, and service sectors...
- the lack of co-operation between regional communities will inhibit tourism growth

Lack of government funding
- InfoCentres need an increase in funding
- need tourism development funding
- difficult to access to available funding
- who was the Western Diversification Fund designed for?

Deficient access to financing for tourism ventures

- small business loans are difficult to access even if the business is doing well, and has a business plan, clients and business experience
- policy at two of our major chartered banks and the FBDB is not to lend to seasonal businesses
- opportunity to joint-venture with large tour operators in Germany and Native theme products
- the greatest inhibitor to wilderness tourism operations is the availability of financing; e.g., wilderness tourism operators operate within 'park use permits' or a 'licence of occupation' neither of which are acceptable as collateral for borrowing purposes

Foreign investors

- locals may lose control of tourism development if local attractions and facilities are all held by foreign investors
- there are not enough local investors to develop tourism in the north, therefore for tourism development to take place, foreign investments need to be encouraged (any foreign investment would generate local employment opportunities)
- create a community investment initiative that would offer financing and management expertise

Provincial representation

- tourism should be viewed as an equal partner when considering economic development

Regional boundaries should be changed

- change boundaries to include all of Highway 37

Shortage of human resources

- shortage of qualified persons

Environmental degradation and visitor erosion

- type of use should be regulated; i.e., ATVs can be damaging to the environment
- increase fish and wildlife enhancement projects

Need for improved signage program

- overhead directional signs are needed at the Prince George Highway 97 and 16 junction
- Ministry of Transportation and Highways' blue-and-white visitor information signs are inconsistent and too vague
- cultural and historic site signs are needed
- increase number of distance signs; i.e., next services 90 kilometres or Smithers 100 kilometres
- blue-and-white sign program is good but needs to be more consistent (some businesses are named on the sign; others are identified by a generic symbol)
- artisans and craftspersons should be made eligible to join the blue-and-white sign program

Resource-use conflicts

- need a resource-use strategy
- there needs to be a more serious commitment to integrated resource management
- visual corridor management
- need a provincial/regional land-use plan

Need to strengthen lines of communication at all levels

- the various ministries should co-ordinate their efforts and reduce the amount of overlapping taking place

Management of Via Rail

- present schedule does not link with other modes of transportation
- if Via Rail were properly managed it could be packaged with other modes of transportation to form a circle tour
- Via Rail management is taking too myopic an approach
- it appears that Via Rail Passenger Service is being de-marketed

Action Steps

Planning should be pursued based on partnerships between government (all levels), the Chamber of Commerce, local residents and private industry. Control must be returned to the local residents. Government's role should be to provide training programs and support.

Arts and Crafts

A list of available local arts and crafts will be compiled by the Arts Council and forwarded to:
Michelle Nataros, Box 2119, Mackenzie, B.C., V0J 2C0.

Telegraph Creek - June 19, 1991

Objectives

Diversify and strengthen the local economy through pursuing increased tourism development.

Opportunities

Increase regional promotions
- Nechako's natural beauty
- intraprovincial circle tours
- packaged tours (pre-season sales)
- sell the remoteness of Telegraph Creek
- generate a placemat that provides a map and local information
- promote road into Telegraph Creek as the most spectacular, scenic and challenging, historic road...(promotions must include road limitations, precautions...)
- Telegraph Creek offers unusually longer, warmer summers and milder, shorter winters; e.g., ranches in the Glenora area had taken off their first crop of hay before we arrived; as well, the gardens in Telegraph Creek are ahead of the gardens in Terrace

Further development and increased promotion of regional geography, history and culture
- Native history and culture
- historic route to the interior
- potential for living history, cultural, and craft making demonstrations

Create additional festivals and events
- annual kite festival
- Tahltan Days - July 1st
- winter carnival

Themes and logos
- Historic Gold Rush Route to the Interior
- The Great River
- the Historic Stikine Valley
- Welcome to the Arctic Pacific Cross Roads
- Regional: one that combines Native, trading and Gold Rush

Increase accommodations
- Telegraph Creek has a privately owned four-vehicle basic campground and feels there is a need to expand the facility (needs financing for pit toilets, picnic tables...)
- no quality competition

Increase the number of outdoor, sport and adventure activities available

- great potential to attract 'rock hounds'
- rafting/kayaking
- hut-to-hut snowmobiling
- auto-touring
- heli-hiking/climbing
- skiing
- hiking
- climbing
- the Glenora Guest Ranch is well suited as a jumping off point for these activities
- first priority should be to develop summer activities

Package winter products and events

- guided glacier and cross-country skiing
- guided snowmobiling
- winter camping

Increase packaged and non-packaged tours

- guided interpretive canoe or raft trips down parts of the Stikine River
- guided hiking
- self-guided historic walking tour of the Telegraph Creek area
- nature photo safaris
- intraprovincial circle tour using various modes of transportation; e.g., paddle-wheel on the Stikine, transfer to horses to go through the canyon, bus to Stewart, ride the ferry to Wrangell and return

Package existing attractions, accommodations and services

- local operators could offer a more complete product if they worked together and packaged existing attractions, accommodations and services
- bring the helicopter operators together with existing accommodations and activities

Co-ordinate and promote regional arts and crafts

- a local arts-and-crafts gift shop has potential

Constraints

Road conditions

- the design and condition of the road into Telegraph Creek discourages many touring visitors from exploring it
- improve Highway 37 (the dust is dangerous)

Lack of community organization or body
- the Regional District Kitimat Stikine is in the process of organizing a Telegraph Creek Community Association to which tourism, heritage and economic development could operate as subcommittees

Lack of co-operation among stakeholders
- community members have to learn to co-operate with one another
- Dease Lake discourages potential visitors from travelling the road to Telegraph Creek

Shortage of human resources
- there are many projects that can be identified but not enough local people to implement them

Don't have an InfoCentre
- need a Telegraph Creek InfoCentre--should be located at the old townsite

Limited access to Crown lands
- the price of released Crown lands is artificially inflated because only small amounts are released

Need for an airstrip or upgrading
- need to improve the airstrip

Prince George InfoCentre
- Prince George InfoCentre promotes Highway 97 and discourages visitors from travelling the Stewart-Cassiar

Native negotiations
- land claims need to be settled

Quality and quantity of facilities
- the area has most of what is needed, but is (in some cases) in desperate need of maintenance dollars; e.g., the Glenora Guest Ranch will not be operating this year because the facility has deteriorated beyond what the paying client would find acceptable

Need for improved signage program
- Signage 'rules' should become 'policies' in the north--the north is different and therefore should be treated differently, however there should be restrictions
- allow advertising at rest stops
- Telegraph Creek needs a community sign
- '2 km' advance warning signs should be installed along Highway 37

Poor research data
- what exactly does the tourist want?

Tourism education
- overall level of education needs to be improved
- need for increased hospitality and human resource training; e.g., Superhost
- southerners lack an understanding of the North
- government could develop a series of tourism-related courses (the following topics could form the outline)
- operators need further training in how to:
  - package products
  - target markets
  - develop historic component
  - build a brochure that targets investors

Need to strengthen lines of communication at all levels
- lines of communication between the ministries of Tourism and Economic Development, Small Business and Trade and all communities in the north need to be strengthened--northern communities feel they're not informed regarding available opportunities

High costs
- high cost of transportation to the area inhibits tourism growth

Lack of government funding
- need tourism development funding--the population isn't large enough to pursue tourism development on their own
- funding is needed to upgrade the infrastructure

Deficient access to financing for tourism ventures
- financing requirements difficult to meet or simply not available due to geographic location (banking policies)

Environmental degradation and visitor erosion
- care should be taken not to exploit the resource at the expense of the environment
- wilderness activities should not encroach on wildlife
- this is a pristine, delicate environment; it can not sustain a large number of visitors at any one time--control is essential

Regional boundaries should be changed
- Nechako Development Region should include Iskut and Telegraph Creek
- Iskut and Telegraph Creek continue to get overlooked in the planning process
- regional district boundaries should remain as is

Community residents indifferent
- apathy among community members

Need an improved transportation network
- regular bus service that traverses the full length of Highway 37 including the Telegraph Creek road
- air service should include direct flights to Terrace and Smithers

Management of Via Rail
- concerned about the Via Rail Skeena Run being cut
- why would rail services be reduced when mass transit is the way of the future?
- Via Rail could be a valuable tourist asset if marketed properly

Action Steps

Planning should be pursued based on partnerships between government (regional district), the Band Council, local residents and private industry. Government's role should be to provide support only.

Special areas should be identified for residents. There are sacred Native sites that should remain closed to the general public. This is an incomplete list, however it is a start: the abandoned Tahltan Village; a number of fishing areas; and possibly the Native cemetery.

Telegraph Creek is forming a historical society as a result of the community meeting. They will use the proposed historical society to source funds that will help restore or stabilize deteriorating historic sites.

In order to maintain **control** over the number and frequency of visitors, the emphasis should be placed on marketing pre-sold packaged tours. Touring visitors should be a secondary source of tourism revenue.

Arts and Crafts

A list of available local arts and crafts will be compiled by Patricia McIntosh and forwarded to:
Michelle Nataros, Box 2119, Mackenzie, B.C., V0J 2C0.

Telkwa - May 23, 1991

Objectives

Diversify the local economy by increasing the economic value of tourism, giving priority to the development of facilities and/or services that would meet the needs of the resident.

Opportunities

Further development and increased promotion of regional geography, history and culture

- the Telegraph Trail (some cabins still along the trail)
- continue to develop historic walking tour (provide benches)
- community should chart the Bulkley River--include river access, picnic areas...
- railway history
- trapping
- Native culture
- mining
- logging (for rail ties)
- agriculture
- pioneer spirit
- museums

Create additional festivals and events

- organize bike races between Telkwa and Smithers (there is sufficient room to build a bike lane paralleling the highway)

InfoCentre improvements

- inquiries are handled by the municipal office, Fort Telkwa RV Park, and the EDC officer--it was felt that the system is adequate

Co-ordinate and promote regional arts and crafts

- newly opened Heritage Home Crafts would be interested in carrying regional arts and crafts
- static displays in museums

Increase number of attractions and/or extend operating hours

- museum hours are poor and inconsistent
- because the summer season is so short, operating hours should be extended

Increase packaged and non-packaged tours

- rafting trips
- horse-drawn wagon rides/trail rides though the historic Hunters Basin
- heli-biking (fly up and ride down)
- wildlife viewing/photo safaris
- bird-watching expeditions

Package winter products and events
- hut-to-hut cross-country skiing (build cabins along a designated route)
- dog-sledding adventures
- downhill skiing/pool pass/gas coupons/accommodations and meals
- ice fishing

Themes and logos
- history, culture, nature
- city conveniences, country living

Increase regional promotions
- steelhead fishing on the Bulkley River
- regional circle tours
- travelling community residents should be supplied with a community promotions package; i.e., brochures, maps,...; residents should act as ambassadors to their community when on the road
- increase regional exposure through co-operative advertising
- develop the product, then partner with NXNW Tourism Association to build a brochure

Accommodate the mobility-impaired market
- develop soft adventure activities in which young families (resident and non-resident) could participate
- any new developments should be built to meet the needs of the mobility-impaired

Design and promote special interest retreats
- artists/music
- photo
- wildlife viewing
- R and R
- health spa

Target seasonal residents
- offer seasonal residents (tree-planters, loggers...) discount rates

Constraints

Quality and quantity of facilities
- build a bike lane between Telkwa and Smithers
- need more boat launches and picnic areas along the Bulkley River (West Fraser Mills could build the picnic tables, giving something back to the community)
- to generate more tourism dollars, additional activities would have to be developed

Management of Via Rail

- concerned about losing Via Rail but feel that: the services need to be upgraded; schedules need to be reorganised so that they are convenient and connect with other forms of transportation; and if Via Rail is not a viable business, then maybe other alternatives should be considered
- residents should support a political lobbyist whose mandate would be to assert political pressure where necessary, in order to keep Via Rail in place
- management, through their actions, are effectively discouraging passenger service

Tourism education

- overall level of education needs to be improved
- the resident and visitor need to be educated on the value of tourism to the region
- difficult to attract young blood to the tourism industry because tourism is not **perceived** as a viable career
- need for increased hospitality and human resource training (Superhost); the operator should spend more time with the customer/visitor, discussing what the community has to offer

Road conditions

- improve highways 16 and 37

Lack of highway pull-outs

- need more rest stops (they should be designed to discourage overnight stops)

Community residents indifferent

- apathy among community members
- community members need to see some ACTION before they believe that something is going to be accomplished
- esthetically unappealing businesses (auto wreckers) should be required to install natural barriers

Lack of government funding

- InfoCentres need an increase in funding
- need tourism development funding

High costs

- locals should receive special consideration regarding ticket prices (lower ski lift ticket rates)
- GST
- gas prices
- Canada is no longer a deal as far as the exchange rate is concerned

Deficient access to financing for tourism ventures

- financing requirements difficult to meet

Regional boundaries should be changed
- change boundaries to include all of Highway 37

Native negotiations
- roadblocks are discouraging potential visitors from touring

Environmental degradation and visitor erosion
- the incidental catch of steelhead at the mouth of the Skeena a very serious problem
- the depletion of the wild fish stocks is of great concern; if the wild fish stocks disappear, so will the fisherman
- commercial fisherman are taking too many steelhead and coho
- abuse of the environment at large is a concern
- hunting is out of control

Need for improved signage program
- need more directional signs
- overhead directional signs for Highway 16 are needed at the Prince George Highway 97 and Highway 16 junction
- increase number of regional information signs
- NXNW information signs are facing the wrong way
- more signs indicating boat launch and pull-out areas
- 'NO OVERNIGHTING' signs should be placed at all highway rest areas and pull-outs where overnight camping facilities are available
- list more communities on the mileage signs
- increase number of point-of-interest signs
- mountain identification/elevation signs (similar to Mt. Robson sign system)
- road elevation signs (RV operators require this information)

Lack of community organization or body
- Telkwa doesn't have a tourism representative

Need to strengthen lines of communication at all levels
- the various ministries should co-ordinate their efforts and reduce the amount of overlapping taking place
- Telkwa doesn't recognize the economic benefits of having the Fort Telkwa RV Park in the area

Resource-use conflicts
- establish wilderness and visual corridors

Provincial representation
- Cabinet doesn't recognize the value of tourism

Co-ordination of regional festivals and events

- post upcoming festivals and events during other festivals and events (the mid-summer rep asked regional communities to display their festivals and events schedule at the Prince George Children's Festival
- festivals and events co-ordinators should be required to review the existing schedule before picking a date (it doesn't do any of the communities any good if there are two festivals on one weekend and zero the next--the whole region loses)
- InfoCentres provide the service
- extend the season by organizing festivals and events during shoulder seasons

Action Steps

Planning should be pursued based on partnerships between government, local residents and private industry. Control must remain with the local residents. Decisions should come from the bottom up (community to provincial government).

Arts and Crafts

A list of available local arts and crafts will be compiled by Cathy Whalen and forwarded to:
Michelle Nataros, Box 2119, Mackenzie, B.C., V0J 2C0.

Vanderhoof - May 7, 1991

Objectives

To develop tourism in relationship to the present economy, working towards an overall economic goal.

Use tourism development (new or improved facilities and services) as a way to attract new residents.

Opportunities

Increase services to the visitor
- potential for highway RV park development

Increase regional promotions
- increase regional exposure through co-operative advertising
- build area promotion signs through a cost-share program
- Vanderhoof as the resting stop for ferry patrons (a comfortable seven- to eight-hour drive from ferry terminal)
- Vanderhoof as the playground for Prince George
- interpretive tours to Elder Hostels

Further development and increased promotion of regional geography, history and culture
- the Nechako is historically rich in archeology
- the Alexander Mackenzie Trail (the grease trail)
- 'Ksan Indian Village Museum (the village may not be in the Nechako region, however it is very much a part of the Nechako's history)
- Chanlac Native village
- Fort St. James was the first capital of New Caledonia
- Hudson Bay Trading Company; i.e., the Fort St. James National Historic Park
- the gold rush
- Nechako Valley was the first agricultural settlement in British Columbia

Create additional festivals and events
- build value into the tourist experience; i.e., co-ordinate a series of events (include: street theatre; slide shows) throughout the region (e.g., Music '91)
- series of community days
- spring and fall geese festivals
- attract additional sporting events

Co-ordinate and promote regional arts and crafts
- regional show
- sell through local business
- InfoCentres could display crafts and direct visitors to businesses that carry them

Accommodate the mobility-impaired market
- all groups should be accommodated

InfoCentre improvements
- board room should be used to show films/videos
- provide picnic tables around the back and side of building
- the visitor should be encouraged to stay longer through the promotion of area activities and attractions
- increased funding
- encourage all InfoCentres to 'close the sale' through providing a booking service or phone numbers for all communities in the region (not just for their own town)

Increase number of attractions and/or extend operating hours
- privatize the Via Rail Skeena run and offer shortened tourist routes
- Native heritage interpretive park; e.g., The Stones that Speak Park, in Alberta
- develop soft adventure products; i.e., 108 Hills Ranch

Increase packaged and non-packaged tours
- increase number of boat tours
- self-guided silviculture tour on Holy Cross Road
- guided industrial tours; i.e., sawmill, mine, etc.
- self-guided walking tours
- heritage tours--all heritage tours should be guided
- interpretive tours

Themes and logos
- history, culture, nature
- theme (or focus) needs to be based on the experience the visitor is going to encounter
- Geographic Centre of Beautiful British Columbia
- the geese

Package winter products and events
- wildlife viewing packaged tours
- run a B.C. Rail bud car for downhill ski packages between Prince George, Vanderhoof and Fort St. James
- cross-country ski to the Saddlebar Lodge for dinner and return by horse-drawn sled
- package curling bonspiels, minor hockey tournament, ice-fishing, snowmobiling, touring, etc., with meals
- become a trapper for a day
- build on the success of 'Dickens of a Christmas'
- dog sledding

Constraints

Lack attractions
- lack attractions that draw visitors into area

Protection of remote historic and rare geographic sites difficult to monitor
- rock paintings need better protection
- archaeological/heritage sites must be protected
- wildlife/nature sites should be preserved
- access to these sites needs to be controlled, only then should they be promoted

Management of Via Rail
- if management is not improved, Via Rail should be privatized
- present schedule of operation does not promote tourism ridership in this area

Tourism education
- educate, plan, develop--**then** promote
- overall level of education needs to be improved
- the resident and visitor need to be educated on the value of tourism to the region
- enrol the 'boss' in Superhost--the bosses are not adopting the training the employees have acquired
- difficult to attract young blood to the tourism industry because tourism is not **perceived** as a viable career

Community residents indifferent
- apathy among community members
- locals lack vision when it comes to tourism opportunities
- until recently some residents didn't want tourism

Road conditions
- further development of highways 16, 27 and 37

Poor research data
- lack of adequate research information

High costs
- maintenance and signing of walking trails high

Marketing of the region needs to be increased
- provincial representation of this region has been poor

Lack of co-operation among stakeholders
- the Chamber works hard to bring sporting events here, and a local hotel closes down on the weekends that the sporting events are in town

Lack of government funding
- InfoCentres need an increase in funding
- need tourism development funding

Deficient access to financing for tourism ventures
- financing requirements difficult to meet

Regional boundaries should be changed
- change boundaries to include all of Highway 37

Geographic location
- the region's climate can be a constraint
- attractions are closed during the winter
- not equipped to capitalize on all seasons

Environmental degradation and visitor erosion
- reduce pollution of our waterways by reducing the number of boats on the lakes and rivers; i.e., offer boat tours that carry larger number of persons

Need for improved signage program
- overhead directional signs for Highway 16 are needed at the Prince George Highway 97 and Highway 16 junction
- Ministry of Transportation and Highways' blue-and-white visitor information signs are inconsistent and too vague
- cultural and historic site signs are needed
- increase number of distance signs; i.e., next services 90 kilometres, Vanderhoof 100 kilometres
- need area promotion signs highlighting each community

Licensing requirements
- licensing requirements for seasonal (long-term) residents is effectively discouraging long-term visits

Need to strengthen lines of communication at all levels
- each community should initiate discussions with neighbouring Native bands, and work towards building partnerships.

Action Steps

Hire a festivals and events co-ordinator in each community to generate, organize and publicize (through a newsletter) events. This same person would be responsible for booking appropriate accommodations, services, etc. Like Fort St. James, Vanderhoof did not feel that overlapping events were a problem. There are only 15 weekends to work with! It would be unrealistic to think that overlapping could be completely eliminated. However, if an accurate, up-to-date calendar were available, the visitor could plan for the ones they'd like to attend.

Projects should be pursued based on partnerships between government and industry. Partnerships are essential in the '90s. All concerned groups should learn to work together.

Arts and Crafts

A list of available local arts and crafts will be compiled by the Arts Council and forwarded to:
Michelle Nataros, Box 2119, Mackenzie, B.C., V0J 2C0.

APPENDIX B

Community Meetings

Attendance and Written Response Totals

Total number of submitted written responses..... 46
Total community meeting participants.....245
Total written response and meeting attendance: 291

Granisle

April 30, 1991
Granisle Village Inn
7:40 pm - 10:20 pm

Attendance:
Gail Radley - TTF Representative
Marilyn Hinton - TTF Representative
Alta Andrist - Mayor of Granisle
Bob Jackman - Nechako RDLO
Fred Shortreid - TTF Chairperson
Michelle Nataros - TTF Facilitator

Community participants 20
Total attendance 26

Burns Lake

May 1, 1991
Arts Gallery Centre
7:20 pm - 10:45 pm

Attendance:
Bob Silverson - TTF Representative
Bill Gilgan - Mayor of Burns Lake
Bob Jackman - Nechako RDLO
Steven Threadkell - Min. ED, SB and T
Fred Shortreid - TTF Chairperson
Michelle Nataros - TTF Facilitator

Community participants 12
Total attendance 18

Houston

May 2, 1991

Meeting was cancelled due to lack of community attendance. The meeting was rescheduled for May 24, 1991, 7:00 pm in the Council Chamber, providing a second opportunity for community participation.

Attendance:
Norman Vriend - Houston Alderman
Bob Jackman - Nechako RDLO
Steven Threadkell - Min. ED, SB and T
Fred Shortreid - TTF Chairperson
Michelle Nataros - TTF Facilitator

Community participants 01
Total attendance 06

Fraser Lake/ Fort Fraser	May 6, 1991 Fraser Lake Elementary and Secondary School 7:15 pm - 10:45 pm		
	Attendance:	Gill Kopy - TTF Representative Fred Shortreid - TTF Chairperson Bob Jackman - Nechako RDLO Michelle Nataros - TTF Facilitator	
		Community participants **Total attendance**	11 **15**
Vanderhoof	May 7, 1991 NVSS Student Lounge 7:15 pm - 10:40 pm		
	Attendance:	Mike Wheeler - TTF Representative Kris Nielsen - TTF Representative Frank Read - Mayor of Vanderhoof Jim Majcher - Min. Tour. Bob Jackman - Nechako RDLO Fred Shortreid - TTF Chairperson Michelle Nataros - TTF Facilitator	
		Community participants **Total attendance**	20 **27**
Fort St. James	May 9, 1991 Fire Hall 7:25 pm - 10:15 pm		
	Attendance:	Kris Nielsen - TTF Representative Sandy Kovacs - Mayor of Fort St. James Steven Threadkell - Min. ED, SB and T Fred Shortreid - TTF Chairperson Michelle Nataros - TTF Facilitator	
		Community participants **Total attendance**	10 **15**

Smithers

May 22, 1991
Ballet Studio
7:35 pm - 11:00 pm

Attendance:

Greg Meredith - TTF Representative
Lynn Christie - TTF Representative
Bob Silverson - TTF Representative
Bob Jackman - Nechako RDLO
Jon Donald - Min. Tour.
Fred Shortreid - TTF Chairperson
Michelle Nataros - TTF Facilitator

Community participants 16
Total attendance 23

Telkwa

May 23, 1991
Meeting Rm #1 - Municipal Office
7:10 pm - 10:15 pm

Attendance:

Joanne VanHorn - TTF Representative
Greg Meredith - TTF Representative
Lynn Christie - TTF Representative
Bob Silverson - TTF Representative
Greg Fortune - Mayor of Telkwa
Bob Jackman - Nechako RDLO
Fred Shortreid - TTF Chairperson
Michelle Nataros - TTF Facilitator

Community participants 06
Total attendance 14

Houston

May 24, 1991
Council Chamber
7:20 pm - 9:30 pm

Attendance:

Marilyn Hinton - TTF Representative
Lynn Christie - TTF Representative
Tom Euverman - Mayor of Houston
Norman Vriend - Houston Alderperson
Bonny Hawley - Houston Alderperson
Terry Gautron - Houston Alderperson
Jim Majcher - Min. Tour.
Steven Threadkell - Min. ED, SB and T
Fred Shortreid - TTF Chairperson
Michelle Nataros - TTF Facilitator

Community participants 01
Total attendance 11

Dease Lake	June 11, 1991 Community Centre 7:40 pm - 10:40 pm		
	Attendance:	Fred Shortreid - TTF Chairperson Michelle Nataros - TTF Facilitator	
		Community participants	10
		Total attendance	**12**
Cassiar	June 12, 1991 Upper Liesure Room 7:45 pm - 10:20 pm		
	Attendance:	Fred Shortreid - TTF Chairperson Michelle Nataros - TTF Facilitator	
		Community participants	06
		Total attendance	**08**
Atlin	June 14, 1991 Community Centre 7:45 pm - 10:15 pm		
	Attendance:	Arthur Mitchell - TTF Representative Shirley Connolly - TTF Representative Gill Kopy - TTF Representative Lynn Christie - TTF Representative Alta Andrist - Mayor of Granisle Greg Fortune - Mayor of Telkwa Bill Gilgan - Mayor of Burns Lake Sandy Kovacs - Mayor of Fort St. James Frank Read - Mayor of Vanderhoof Colin Seeley - Mayor of Fraser Lake Bill Zemenchik - Regional Advisory Council Member Ron Bell - Nechako RDO Bob Jackman - Nechako RDLO Jim Majcher - Min. Tour. Fred Shortreid - TTF Chairperson Michelle Nataros - TTF Facilitator	
		Community participants	41
		Total attendance	**57**

Telegraph Creek	June 19, 1991 Old Tahltan Band Council Office 7:05 pm - 10:30 pm	
	Attendance:	Fred Shortreid - TTF Chairperson Michelle Nataros - TTF Facilitator
		Community participants 14 **Total attendance 16**
Iskut	June 20, 1991	
		Visited the Iskut Band Council and operators, in the Iskut area.

Refer to:
Let's Talk! Nechako Region Community Input
for meeting details

APPENDIX C

Participant Contact List

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APPENDIX D

Tourism Terms and Definitions

In this section, several tourism-related technical terms are identified and defined. The definitions are based both on their current use in the literature and general tourism planning, and on their particular application to the industry in British Columbia.

TOURISM
The travel activities and services used by any British Columbia resident beyond a 40-kilometre radius from home for the purpose of personal enjoyment. Also, the travel, activities and services used by non-residents who enter the province for any reason other than work. It is recognized that elements of tourism are often involved when people travel on business.

TOURIST
Any British Columbia resident travelling in excess of 40 kilometres from his/her home for any purpose other than commuting to work and any non-resident who enters British Columbia for any purpose other than work.

TOURISM ATTRACTIONS
The natural and man-made features both within and adjacent to a community that are of interest to tourists. The features constitute the reason(s) why tourists come to an area. Unique shops, historic sites, industries, lakes, mountain, and wilderness, as well as fairs, festivals, competitions and tours, are all examples.

TOURISM SERVICES
These services include the hotels, motels, campgrounds, restaurants, service stations, and other retail businesses in a community that take care of visitors' needs.

TOURISM PROMOTION
Involves how individuals and groups organize to market an area to potential tourists. It includes the tools communities use to attract visitors. Advertising, travel shows, magazine articles, brochures, maps, videos, commercial and promotional signs, auto tour guides and tourist information booths are all examples.

TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE
The term infrastructure, in reference to the tourism industry, covers all facilities, utilities and services that make it possible for people to travel. Tourism infrastructure includes the transportation systems, sewer, power, water, communications, health care, police protection and land resources.

TOURISM HOSPITALITY
The way which tourists are greeted and treated. As the most human aspect of tourism, hospitality relates to the ability and enthusiasm of people who deal with tourists. Hospitality in most cases involves everyone in the community. By obvious extension, it determines whether visitors have a pleasant and enjoyable experience in an area and whether they will return or tell others about it.

APPENDIX E

Preparation of a

Regional/Community Theme

PREPARATION OF A REGIONAL/COMMUNITY THEME

'BUILDING COMMUNITY TOURISM'

Whistler Centre for Business and the Arts

James R. MacGregor
Director

MACLAREN PLANSEARCH CORP.

April 21-24, 1991

IDENTIFICATION OF APPROPRIATE REGIONAL/COMMUNITY THEMES AND IMAGES

A strong tourism image or theme is one of the most important components of a tourism product, a community/regional destination area, or tourism attraction. Its identification is also the most frequently overlooked of regional/community tourism planning processes and tourism product business planning. When properly defined it is an essential aspect to the overall motif or physical expression of a product and is also an integral part of a marketing strategy. In fact a product or destination region that does not have identifiable and cohesive theme becomes difficult to market.

Because the identification of theme or an image is an integral part of the planning process identification is synonomous with good tourism planning. While the process may be simple and systematic it can also be demanding in terms of creativity, perception and integrated and systemic thinking.

The sequential steps are quite basic and include:

1. Comprehensive review of all cultural and natural resources with a special emphasis on those that are unique, interesting and potentially provide identity to the product or area.

2. Comprehensive review of all market segments including their interests, attitudes and motivation factors.

3. The matching of markets with the resource base to determine most identifiable and comprehensive theme and subthemes.

4. The preparation of an overall development concept or strategy that supports the theme or image.

5. The identification of specific, thematic attractions or characteristics for either the products or the area.

6. Preparation of a marketing strategy that is based on identified theme or image.

The following text outlines in further detail the steps that will be covered during the theme/image workshop.

THE THEME DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The theme or image development and implementation of a theme can be divided into four phases including:

PHASE I: Inventory/Analysis/Community Involvement
PHASE II: Theme/Concept/Development
PHASE III: Theme Development Strategy
PHASE IV: Implementation Strategy

PHASE I: INVENTORY/ANALYSIS/COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The process commences with two steps.

1.1 **INITIAL MEETING**

- Step 1: Meeting of the theme development committee.

  The initial meeting with the committee will have the following objectives:

  a) establish the theming process or work plan, travel industry contacts and overall approach to ensure that all parties have a common understanding of the purpose and the tasks.

  b) identify sources of information (documents, resource leaders, etc.) and obtain a list of persons to be interviewed;

  c) determine timing and logistics for the public involvement and consultation program.

- Step 2: Information Review

  Review existing tourism reports and previous tourism planning documents, promotional literature, market data and statistical data. Obtain available inventory of tourism plant and services and infrastructure. Review recent and proposed marketing campaigns to assess appropriateness of existing image.

  It is also important to inventory themes that are portrayed in adjacent regions.

1.2 COMMUNITY AWARENESS AND INTERVIEWS

Interviews between committee members and key tourism operators in the designated area are conducted. Emphasis is placed on allowing the community representatives to express their perceptions of community images.

1.3 RESOURCE INVENTORY ANALYSIS

A comprehensive review of all tourism related resources is be undertaken. This is typically categorized under the following components:

a) Natural/Historical/Cultural/Thematic Resources;
b) Tourism Plant (existing tourism facilities);
c) Infrastructure;
d) Transportation; and
e) Retail and Commercial Recreation Services.

a) Natural/Historical/Cultural/Thematic Resources

- Natural Resources; the diverse natural features within a region or community is inventoried and analyzed. Specific recognition of the unique environmental features are noted.

  Those natural attractions that create both a base for resource related thematic activities as well as a background to enhance the community tourism product are reviewed. All the various natural features are mapped at the area or community level and theme/image attractivity of each feature is documented.

- Heritage/Cultural Resources; all historical/ cultural resources are evaluated for their potential as attractions and their suitability for generating a community theme. Community resources based on local, cultural and lifestyle values will suggest potential cultural theme attractions and activities.

- Social Resources; the human resources in the area are examined through an analysis of population structure and trends. Special features such as multiculturalism are identified and opportunities for integrating local culture values into the tourism industry is assessed.

b) Tourism Plant

The existing tourism plant is evaluated to determine theme opportunities. They are classified according to:

- events and attractions;
- accommodation;
- food services;
- information services; and
- recreation facilities.

Events and Attractions; natural and staged attractions and special events, festivals, cultural events, nature based opportunities frequently offer immediate opportunities for theme development.

Accommodation; a major accommodation plant can set the basis for a community theme. For example the Digby Pines on Nova Scotia or the Algonquin Hotel in St. Andrews establishes the image for those community.

Food Services; an evaluation of the food service sector will determine if there can be a theme established on native/local food. Granby, Quebec for instance, when reviewing its restaurant base chose to become the Gourmet Capital of Eastern Canada. Similarly, Louisiana promotes the 'taste of Louisiana' as its umbrella image.

Information Services and Information Centres; this may provide insight into images that existing published literature and government planning reports will be used to inventory the types of tourist information that is being disseminated.

There are many examples including:

- Calgary Stampede
- Niagara-on-the-Lake

Recreation Facilities; all pertinent recreation facilities are inventoried and analyzed (e.g. schools, churches, etc.). Major athletic facilities can establish a 'sports' theme. Saskatoon has taken this approach.

c) Transportation

Transportation corridors (land, water) have provided an image for many regions. The Alaska Highway is the principal promotional image of Dawson Creek.

Canoe/Hiking/Snowmobiling/Boating Corridors can also provide themes such as the impact of the Canoe Trail on Norman Wells.

d) Retail and Commercial Tourism Recreation Services

All major retail outlets and other commercial facilities that provide services are investigated. They are classified according to:

Retail Services; all stores that respond to recreation or festival shopping should be inventoried for special tourism features. West Edmonton Mall and Metrotown (Burnaby) have become theme generators in these communities.

Tourism Services

The following are evaluated for the existing and potential image they project:

- inbound receptive tour operators in the region/community;
- wholesalers selling regional/community destination travel.

Entertainment Facilities; (community halls, exhibition areas, churches, etc.). This should include type of facility, potential theme (special features) opportunities.

Group Facilities; schools, government buildings, churches, large open spaces, halls, commercial buildings, etc. are inventoried.

1.4 MARKET RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

The current market research is conducted simultaneously with the analysis of the resources. The research considers the existing markets, market competition, market trends, tourism trends, and market potential, which, in combination, will ultimately define the overall marketing theme for a region, community or product.

- Existing Markets

A comprehensive literature search and review of tourism related surveys and reports is undertaken to assess existing markets and marketing programs.

- Market Competition and Market Share

  The marketing plans, expenditures, themes and strategies used by competitive destinations. In B.C., pertinent Tourism Canada marketing plans are evaluated with those of Tourism B.C. and the Adjacent Regional Tourism Associations.

- Market Trends

  The historical and existing markets are analyzed to develop a thorough knowledge of trends, patterns, visitor's origins, motivation, preferred activities and visitor expenditures, in order to identify demand sources and developments that offer the greatest potential for growth. Current marketing efforts are also evaluated to provide insight into the possible effects of various alternative marketing themes.

- Tourism Trends

  Regional and community trends (increased use of wholesalers, speciality tours, increased use of package tours, etc.) are assessed for their theme implications. Tourism trends are considered in the context of general Canadian and International economic and social changes.

- Market Segmentation

  The results of the market evaluation will enable the committees or planners to establish definite market segments. Depending on the variety of target markets a region/community may require several sub-themes. Those market segments that

suggest specific theming frequently or sub-theming opportunities include:

- sportfishing (e.g. Campbell River)
- pre/post convention (e.g. Penticton);
- windsurfing (e.g. Hood River on the Columbia Gorge, Dididaht);
- whalewatching (e.g. Tofino/Ucluelet).

As well, certain existing segments can be further broken down. For example, wildlife viewing can be segmented in birdwatching, whalewatching, etc.

Market projections based on projected growth in each of these segments are used to determine the level of promotional effort required for each segment.

- Market Projections

The market analysis covers the major market segments for an area including origin (e.g. Western Provinces, rest of Canada, Western United States, Germany, Japan, etc.). It considers such issues as long-term societal and leisure trends (e.g. the growing interest in themed packaged and mini vacations), the implications of changes in energy prices on remote tourism destinations, and expected developments in competing tourist destinations.

Qualified 5 to 7 year market projections are prepared. This time frame is needed to adequate implement a recognizable theme.

Two sets of market projections are usually prepared. The first will outline market growth in

the event that no new orientations are taken. The second will show the kinds of tourist visitations which could be generated through the successful implementation of the themed tourism strategy.

PHASE II: THEME/CONCEPT/DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

This phase will match the market (demand) with the resources (supply) in the context of the level of community awareness, policies and plans as documented in the first phase of the study. Opportunities/constraints provide a synthesis of the conclusions reached in Phase I. The following information will be synthesized.

2.1 DEMAND/SUPPLY ANALYSIS AND PRODUCT/MARKET MATCHING

From data generated in Phase I (Market Research and Analysis), and Resource Inventory and Analysis, a matrix is developed indicating market demand and characteristics and resource (natural/culture) supply by activity sector. Also using market trends developed in Phase I, future demand is estimated considering complementary and competing facilities and resources in adjacent zones.

2.2 THEME/IMAGE IDENTIFICATION AND IMPLICATIONS

The matrix used to match the resources and markets will suggest an overall theme or image for region or community. The natural/cultural resources are usually the most significant elements in determining the theme, however it is essential that it be responsive to the demands and expectations of the various market segments. The theme should provide a simple and clear statement that can easily be translated into a strong marketing tool.

2.3 ALTERNATIVE CONCEPTS AND PRELIMINARY DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The suggested theme (and subthemes) forms the basis for approximately two or three alternative development concepts. These concepts are global and comprehensive, but not technical. They show the functional relationships between the various potential development areas and include but not be limited to the following components:

- thematic and subtheme development opportunities;
- travel corridors;
- tourism service areas;
- theme attractions; and
- environmental protection areas.

- Thematic and Subtheme Development Opportunities

  The results of the resource and market analysis combined with input from the industry enable the planner or committee to identify a preliminary list of thematic development opportunities.

  Development opportunities may take the form of package tours, new construction, expansion or repositioning of existing product, development of ancillary facilities, special events, historical/ cultural attractions, etc.

PHASE III: THEME DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Once a theme has been established it is necessary to prepare a development and marketing strategy to implement the plan.

The strategy includes:

a) Goals and Objectives

- an overview of the social, economic, and environmental/cultural goals of the community.

b) Development Principals

- guidelines for implementing the theme or subthemes including:
  - motif and architectural standards
  - implications to local cultural sensitivities
  - implicatfon of seasonality

c) Theme development opportunity selection and priorities

The thematic attractions identified in Phase II are evaluated and ranked.

- Evaluation and Ranking

  Objective criteria to evaluate and determine priorities among identified tourism development opportunities are defined by the theme development.

  Criteria are selected for use in a point or scoring system in order to rank the potential thematic tourism development opportunities. Among the criteria to be used would be the following:

- relationship to overall development strategy;
- potential for multi-community theme packages;
- synergy effect (the special benefits resulting from the clustering of several themed projects);
- impact on income and employment;
- impact on diversification of economic activity;
- opportunities for local operators;
- impact on seasonality for shoulder season opportunities;
- provide opportunities for skill development, training and job entry;
- urgency of product development;
- impact on special events (e.g. 50th Anniversary of Alaska Highway);
- funding potential;
- creation of resident recreational opportunities;
- negative effects on competitive facilities;
- the market sectors that the opportunity would attract, and, in turn, rely on. How stable are these? How costly to reach them effectively? What are their spending patterns?; capital costs.

The purpose of using a well-defined numerical evaluation system is to discipline and systematize the selection processes and clarify the priorities for the committees and the community.

All proposed theme development opportunities will be presented according to:

- theme association;
- facilities to be built;
- activities to be included;
- required action for implementation;
- responsibility;
- benefits;
- impact on potential markets;
- cost estimates.

APPENDIX F

Post

Let's Talk Tourism

Tourism Planning Meetings

Community Input

Atlin

Submitted to: Nechako Tourism Task Force
Submitted by: Arthur Mitchell (verbal)
Dated: September 8, 1991

Additional Opportunities

1) Proposed Atlin-Juneau Highway would transform Atlin into a **major** tourist opportunity
   - the proposed highway would create an exciting circle tour that would utilize both sea and land as transportation routes (the highway and ferry system)
   - the circle tour would include the communities of Juneau, Atlin, Whitehorse, and Skagway

Fraser Lake/Fort Fraser

Submitted to: Nechako Tourism Task Force
Submitted by: Gill Kopy (verbal)
Dated: September 8, 1991

Additional Constraints

1) New fishing regulations on the Stellako River
   - fishermen are unclear on the new fishing regulations and have been asking for clarification from the Stellako Lodge which is not equipped to answer the questions
   - there seems to be a lack of Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks personnel to police the river

District of Houston

Submitted to: Nechako Tourism Task Force
Submitted by: Marilyn Hinton (written)
Dated: September 11, 1991

Opportunities

1) Tree planters
   - buy accommodations and equipment
   - come back with their families as tourists in future years

2) "Access for All" is a viable concept in Houston
   - Houston has designated "Access for All" as part of their economic development strategy
   - recreation sites at Byman Park on the Morice River, Irrigation Lake and Silverthorne Lake have been made wheelchair accessible
   - the park currently under construction (beside the Infocentre) has been designed for wheelchair access
   - the Infocentre is ramped for convenient access

3) Forestry Tours
   - Houston Forest Products and Northwood Pulp and Timber Ltd. offer complimentary forestry tours

4) Freshwater fishing
   - excellent fishing for rainbow trout and steelhead

5) Co-operation
   - the strength of Houston is the excellent co-operation among the residents and businesses

6) Moderate temperatures
   - sunny skies, clean air and two clean rivers

7) Excellent local area map
   - a co-operative effort between the Chamber of Commerce and the Ministry of Forests

8) Cross-country ski facilities
   - at Silverthorne Lake are of the calibre and size for provincial events

9) Fish-counting fence
   - located in downtown Houston

10) Discovery Houston
   - a major annual trade show held the second weekend in September, attracts 3,000 to 4,000 people for the two-day show

11) Sanctioned horse racetrack

12) Serendipity Day
   - a major arts-and-craft show held the first weekend in December

13) Home of the Bulkley Valley Regional Museum

Constraints

1) exteriors of buildings require clean-up, fix-up, paint-up

2) municipal campground requires clearer signage

Short-Term Projects

1) Regional "clean-up, fix-up, paint-up" campaign

2) Discourage overnight parking on public lands where commercial sites are available
   - make overnight parking awkward; e.g., slope pull-outs

3) Limit stays longer than one night to British Columbians

Smithers

Submitted to: Nechako Tourism Task Force
Submitted by: Joe L'Orsa (verbal)
Dated: October 1991

Additional Opportunities

1) Wildlife-viewing in natural habitat
   - caribou-viewing opportunities in the Telkwa Mountains and goats in the Babine Recreation Area

2) Highway 16
   - promote Highway 16 as a scenic corridor

Cassiar

Submitted to: Nechako Tourism Task Force
Submitted by: Mighty Moe (verbal)
Dated: October 18, 1991

Additional Opportunities

1) Celebrate the 1992 20th anniversary of the Stewart-Cassiar Highway
   - celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Stewart-Cassiar Highway in addition to the 50th anniversary of the Alaska Highway
   - promote a circle tour
   - provide communities along the Stewart-Cassiar Highway with 20th anniversary banners

2) Promote pioneer history

APPENDIX G

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